NEW MASSES

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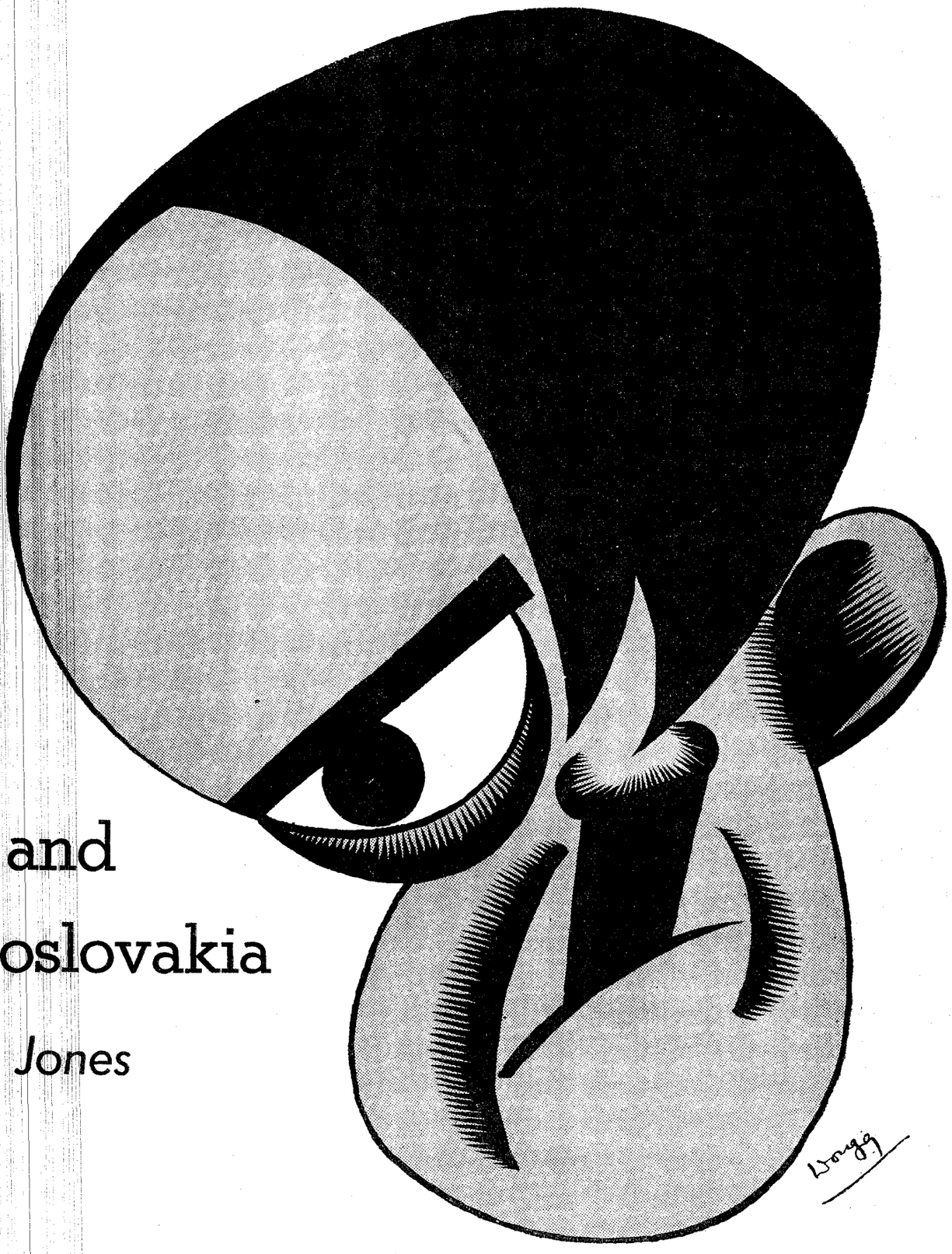

Hitler and Czechoslovakia

F. Elwyn Jones

JOSEPH FREEMAN **ROBERT HOLMES** **F. W. DUPEE**

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BETWEEN OURSELVES

THE number of defections from the "American Committee for the Defense of Leon Trotsky" now stands at ten. Including those already noticed in our columns, the list is as follows: Jacob Billikopf, Le Roy Bowman, Sara Bard Field, Lewis Gannett, Mauritz A. Hallgren, Sam Jaffe, Freda Kirchwey, Manuel Komroff, Evelyn Preston, and Paul Ward.

Next week we will publish what seems to us to partake of the nature of a scoop. Editor Joseph Freeman, after a chase over hill and dale, mesa, cañon, and sierra, finally managed to obtain an interview with President Cárdenas of Mexico. Sitting before the tent in which Cárdenas had been sleeping, and facing a blue Pacific bay, Freeman put to the chief executive of our neighbor republic a series of questions which have, with their answers, weighty meaning for Mexico's future. Don't forget to read this lively interview—in next week's issue.

What's What

SEVERAL agencies make appeals for various kinds of aid to the defenders of republican Spain. From the North American Committee to Aid Spanish Democracy, Bishop Francis J. McConnell, chairman, comes the news that the committee has raised the slogan "5000 cases of food for Spain by March 1." Flying squads will visit food wholesalers for donations, and all readers who are in a position to contribute non-perishable foodstuffs suitable for shipment are requested to communicate at once with the committee at 381 Fourth Ave., N. Y. The food drive will wind up with a "tag day" fund-raising drive from Feb. 27 to March 1. In Chicago, the Professional Committee for Medical Aid to Spain has set March 1 as the deadline for sending to Madrid a complete field ambulance unit, including blood-transfusion apparatus. This committee, located in Suite 400-2, 30 North Dearborn St., is now carrying on a $5000 fund drive to purchase the unit. The drive will culminate with an entertainment and dance in Chicago's Steuben Club, the evening of Feb. 27. The New York City division of the American League Against War and Fascism urges local readers to arrange private gatherings of a social and educational nature to aid in the raising of funds for the purchase of blankets, clothing, and other supplies needed in Spain. This division of the League, with offices at 45 East 17th St., N. Y., is prepared to make suggestions on entertainment for such gatherings and to supply speakers. All funds raised, it is stated, will be turned over to the North American Committee.

Contributors Rolfe Humphries (see p. 22) and Genevieve Taggard, outstanding poets both, will give a course in verse-writing, including lectures, readings, criticism, and laboratory method, under the auspices of the League of American Writers. Note the following conditions and details: applicants must be not younger than eighteen or older than twenty-five; they may not have published any verse except in school or college papers; they must submit, when applying, the one poem, not over 100 lines, which they consider representative of their best work. The courses will run ten weeks, and will cost three dollars; enrollment in each class will be limited to twenty or twenty-five students. Mr. Humphries's group will meet Monday evenings in March, April, and May, and Miss Taggard's will meet Wednesday evenings for the same period. Application for membership in the courses must conform to the conditions specified and must be made in writing to the offices of the League of American Writers, 125 East 24th St., N. Y.

We wish to congratulate the reading public, Author James T. Farrell, and the Vanguard Press, publishers, on the recent victory clearing Farrell's novel, *A World I Never Made,* of charges of indecency brought by Arch-Snooper John S. Sumner in New York. Hearings before Magistrate Curran resulted in the book's receiving a clean bill of health.

Contributor Anton Refregier informs us that the American Artists' School, of which he is a director, will celebrate its first anniversary at a banquet at the Hotel Brevoort in New York, Wednesday, Feb. 27. The program includes as speakers Erika Mann, daughter of Novelist Thomas Mann, Carnegie Medalist Peter Blume, J. B. Neumann, and the dancer Felicia Sorel, who appears at the Club Versailles in New York.

Who's Who

F. ELWYN JONES is an English writer and barrister who organized the legal defense of the Austrian Social Democrats who were seized by the Austrian fascists at the time of the fascist putsch there. His article in this issue is a chapter from his book, *Hitler's Drive to the East,* just published in England by Victor Gollancz.

Joseph Freeman is chief editor of this magazine. His current book, *An American Testament,* the autobiography of his first thirty years, gives much of the history of the early days of this magazine.

Harry Weiss was an economist for the National Recovery Administration, and is now connected with the Social Security Board.

Dudley Collard, as the editor's note on page 13 indicates, is an English barrister who was an eye-witness of the recent Moscow trials of Radek and others.

F. W. Dupee was editor of *Miscellany,* a literary and critical journal. He is now acting as literary editor of the NEW MASSES during the absence abroad of Isidor Schneider. His article on Pushkin in this issue is by way of being our celebration of the 200th anniversary of the great Russian poet, which is being heralded on an international scale at this time. The American Pushkin Committee, headed by Poet Robert Frost, has been sponsoring a series of events in a score or more of cities in this country. The Chicago Pushkin Committee is giving a Pushkin program at Orchestra Hall, Feb. 20, and an exhibit of Pushkiniana is being shown until Feb. 29 in the Philadelphia Public Library.

Robert Holmes has contributed to our columns on several occasions, chiefly in connection with labor activities on the West Coast.

Anna Rochester is on the staff of the Labor Research Association.

C. Elwell was formerly editor of the *Hunger Fighter,* organ of the Unemployment Councils before they merged with the Workers' Alliance.

Jack Conroy is well known to our readers as author of *The Disinherited* and other works.

William Friedman is a designer who has done work in furniture, interior, and housing design. He is instructor in Industrial Design at the Design Laboratory, N. Y. He will continue to review the industrial arts in our pages.

The etching by Judith Gutman Quat on page 23 is on exhibition with her other work in the smaller gallery of the Guild Art Gallery, N. Y., until Feb. 27.

Flashbacks

EXECUTIONS of Chinese Communists, which not so long ago afforded more than a dime's worth of shivers to the gasp-as-you-glance readers of *Life,* reached astronomic proportions Feb. 21, 1928, if we are to believe the New York *Times.* Outside Canton on that day, 1700 men and women fell before firing squads or had their heads hacked off. . . . The grinning, exuberant Red Army of the Soviet Union trundles the latest defense gadgets through the Red Square on Feb. 23,

the nineteenth anniversary of its founding. On this day, youths who have never lived under any except a Bolshevik regime, sing as they march in this peace-loving army which parades to remind the world—well, just to remind the world. . . . The creation of the Red Army coincided with the seventieth anniversary of the French revolution of Feb. 22-24, 1848, during which King Louis Philippe was deposed and a republic proclaimed. . . . The Communist revolution in Hungary, which foreign armies eventually crushed, began Feb. 20, 1919.

THIS WEEK

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NEW MASSES
FEBRUARY 23, 1937

Hitler and Czechoslovakia

Fascism within and without makes the little republic a powder keg

By F. Elwyn Jones

"We stop the eternal march to the south and west of Europe and turn our eyes towards the land in the east."—ADOLF HITLER in *Mein Kampf*.

WHEN the *Anglo-German Review*, the latest product of the Nazi Ministry of Propaganda, made its first appearance, to celebrate the arrival in London of Herr von Ribbentrop as Ambassador to England, it announced that its policy was to foster good relations between the British people and the ninety million people of German origin in Central Europe. The population of Germany is sixty-five million. The other twenty-five million whom the Nazis include in their empire are, apart from those overseas, subjects of Czechoslovakia, Poland, Rumania, Yugoslavia, France, Belgium, Lithuania, Italy. These subjects in all these countries form a ready nucleus for Nazi activity.

It is upon the presence within Czechoslovakia of three and a half million Germans that Nazi propaganda in Czechoslovakia depends. Czechoslovakia, bounded by Germany on the east, west, and north, would be the first target of Berlin in the event of war. Prague has understood her geographical disadvantage well enough since the Great War. It was Benes, together with his collaborator Titulescu, who conceived the Little Entente between Czechoslovakia, Rumania, and Yugoslavia. The Little Entente was linked up with Greece and Turkey through the Balkan Entente, as an obstacle to Nazi plans for expansion in eastern and southeastern Europe.

Czechoslovakia has also had to resist the economic expansion of Germany. The Czech Law of National Defense, passed in July 1936, forbade Czech firms to employ foreigners on government contracts even remotely connected with national defense. Another Czech law confined the financial interests of big German concerns like the A. E. G., Siemens & Halske, Mannesmann, and I. G. Farben, to a minority holding in Czechoslovak companies. And the Czech government has made it impossible for new German-Czechoslovakian enterprises to be formed.

For Czechoslovakia the grim fact remains, however, that there are 3,500,000 Germans organized in a powerful minority inside her country.

The suppression of the Nazi Party in

Lester Polakov

Czechoslovakia was followed in 1934 by the formation of the Sudeten German Homeland Front, run as closely as the law allowed on Nazi lines with Nazi ideals and with the suppressed Nazi Party as its backbone. A glance at the rules of the Sudeten German Party makes this quite clear. They state that:

> Admission to the party can be granted only after official investigation and confirmation of the candidate's right to consider himself of German stock. German stock means that German blood and that German type which are the foundations of the German national community.

How closely the Sudeten German Party, under Konrad Henlein's leadership, is patterned on the Nazi model may be seen by the report in June 1935 that in many parts of north Bohemia, merchants and business men of Jewish and Czech stock were being boycotted by the Sudeten German Party.

Konrad Henlein's Party coöperates directly with Berlin. A propaganda school for Sudeten Germans has been established in Dresden, whence Nazi propaganda in Czechoslovakia is directed by one Krebs. Herr Krebs was formerly a deputy in the Prague parliament, and was "elected" to the German Reichstag on March 29, 1936.

The Nazi propaganda ministry has established a special press service for the East (Pressedienst Ostraum: P. D. O.), which, from its office in the Alsenstrasse in Berlin, deluges the countries southeast of Germany with propaganda.

The propaganda ministry has also planned the erection of the Erzgebirge and in the Bavarian Forest (that is, right on the Czechoslovakian frontier) of two new radio relay stations connected with the main broadcasting stations in Munich and Leipzig. It will thus be possible for cheap wireless sets in Czechoslovakia to pick up the daily propaganda broadcasts from Germany.

THESE are not new methods of penetration. There are others, however, with which the Nazis are rapidly familiarizing Europe. During 1935 and 1936, there were many cases of kidnapings and attempted kidnapings by Gestapo agents. Seven of the victims were Czech subjects.

The method usually employed was similar to that used for the kidnaping of Berthold Jacob. The Gestapo agents induced their victims to come to some rendezvous near the German frontier. There they were seized and taken over the border into Germany.

On March 23, 1935, one Kurzke, a German émigré in Czechoslovakia, was asked to go to a border inn at Koenigsham to meet a relative from Germany who was to bring him some money. He went, taking his wife with him. In front of the appointed inn, he was greeted by men he did not know, who surrounded him and his wife, seized them, and dragged them over the German border a few yards away. Kurzke and his wife have never been heard of since.

Theodor Lessing, distinguished as a professor of philosophy of Hanover Technical High School, was Jewish and a pacifist—a fatal combination for a present-day German. In March 1933, he emigrated to Czechoslovakia. At one a. m. on September 1, 1933, he was shot in his home at Marienbad. He

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died of two bullet wounds. The Marienbad police found the gun that was used, and an empty cartridge. They tracked them down to a Nazi who, before the night of the murder, had changed several thousand kronen into German marks at an exchange office. Immediately after committing the murder, he escaped over the German border.

Rudolf Formis was a follower of Otto Strasser, the leader of the "Black Front" Nazi opposition to Hitler, and was director of the Stuttgart broadcasting station. When Hitler broadcast from there in the summer of 1933, the transmission cable at the station was cut, and Hitler's voice was not heard that day. Formis was put into the Heuberg concentration camp. He escaped from there into Czechoslovakia, and at Zahori, near Pribram, he set up an illegal radio station from which he broadcast anti-Hitler reports to Germany each day until January 23, 1935.

In the early hours of the morning of January 24, 1935, Rudolf Formis was shot dead in his hotel at Pribram. His Nazi murderers had driven into Czechoslovakia from Germany in a fast Mercedes. At 6 a. m., leaving Formis dead in his room, they drove back into Germany at Teschen.

In 1936, the Czechoslovakian frontier police caught the Nazi agent, Herbert Willkomm. He confessed that he had attempted to kidnap the German refugee Richard Anders by inducing him on January 2 to return to Germany, and that he did it on instructions from a Dresden *Kriminal-Kommissar*.

In the autumn of 1935, a group of twenty-eight Nazi agents was caught by the Czechoslovakian authorities. Most of them were members of the Sudeten German Party. At the trial of nine of them in Prague on November 7, 1935, it was discovered that military espionage in Czechoslovakia was being directed by the Gestapo from Annaberg, in Saxony, and that whole families were in the pay of the Reich, sending reports to Germany through officials of the Sudeten German Party, Gestapo agents, and Reichswehr officers.

Until 1936, the Sudeten Germany Party stood more or less alone in Czechoslovakian politics, the Catholic and nationalist feelings of the bourgeois parties excluding the possibility of coalition. The Austro-German agreement, plus Hitler's *rapprochement* with the Pope, went far to overcome the religious difficulty, and with the outbreak of the military rebellion in Spain, there appeared a reactionary front extending from the Henlein Party, the Czech fascists, and the Slovak and Magyar fascists to the right wing of the Czech Agrarian (government) Party.

This reactionary front presents a new menace to the existence of Czechoslovakia as an independent state, and may have the effect of driving Czechoslovakia into the camp of the Third Reich.

It is significant that the general secretary of the Czech Agrarian Party, the largest government party, at a public meeting in October 1936, put forward the demand for a "revision of Czechoslovakian foreign policy"—that is, for scrapping the mutual assistance pact with the U. S. S. R. and for approaching Nazi Germany. Herr Beran, whose mouthpiece is the important anti-Benes newspaper *Venkov*, is chairman of the Agrarian Party. He is known to be in touch with von Papen, and has himself made many violent anti-Communist speeches. The right wing of the Agrarian Party thus adopts openly the foreign policy which the Sudeten Germans and the Slovak and Magyar fascists have been pressing.

This *volte-face* by the Agrarians is the result of steady pressure from Germany, and is a success for Hitler's "psychological offensive."

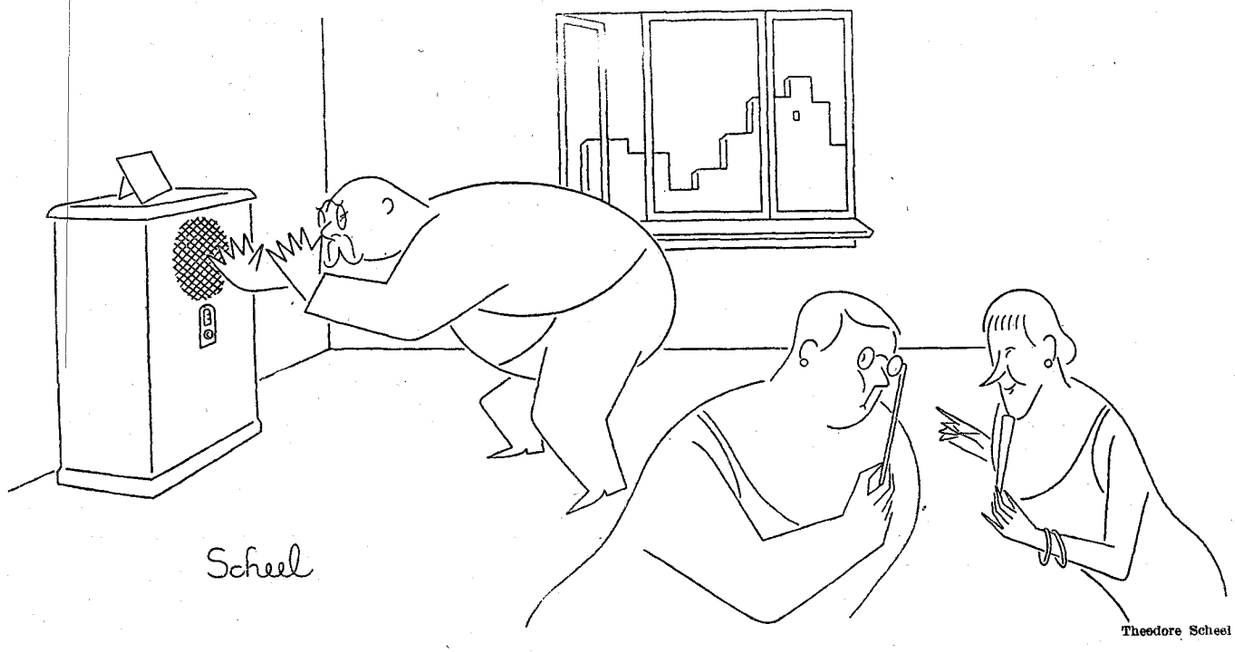
The Sudeten German Party, through the speeches of its leaders, presented itself to the Czech bourgeoisie in the autumn of 1936 as the "party of order" in the German district, and openly and directly offered its services in the common fight to "destroy bolshevism." The agrarian group's newspaper acknowledged this offer in a leading article in which not only Henlein's demand for "national autonomy" in the German area was declared to be only a matter of course, but the Sudeten German Party was at the same time praised for having "abandoned radicalism," *i. e.,* silenced the attacks of the Czech capitalists.

Henlein's party has also made approaches to the two German bourgeois parties, the Farmers' League and the German Christian Socialists. Political declarations by leaders of these parties hint at a *rapprochement* on the basis of a fight against communism and support of the foreign policy of the Third Reich.

THE IMMEDIATE AIM of the Nazis is to persuade Czechoslovakia, by veiled threats and offers of friendship, presented alternately, to cancel the pact with Soviet Russia. The overthrow of M. Titulescu, which, as will be seen later, was the result of a remarkable Nazi plot, was a step towards this end. Rumania's Titulescu was a Francophile who supported a policy of friendship with the U. S. S. R., and it was he and President Benes who used to devise the policy of the Little Entente, to which Yugoslavia used to agree.

A new pro-German government has also come to Yugoslavia, and at the Bratislava Conference of the Little Entente in September 1936, it was reported that M. Stojadinovitch, the Yugoslav premier and foreign secretary, endeavored to persuade Czechoslovakia to drop the Russian alliance.

The attempt failed, President Benes making it quite plain that he regarded the friendship of the Soviet Union as reinsuring the guarantees of Czechoslovakia's security afforded by



"Herman didn't believe Mrs. Dilling's book until he heard the Red Network on his own radio."

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the League covenant and the alliance with France and the other Entente states.

The *communiqué* issued by the Little Entente after the Bratislava Conference made it clear, however, that Benes's conception of a Little Entente united in its foreign policy no longer exists. Point 3 of the *communiqué* stated:

> Regional pacts, e. g., the Locarno pact, will be the subject of special attention by the Little Entente. But the security system should not be limited to the west. Such a partial division would not assist the necessary general European security. But because it is not certain whether in the distant future it will be possible to create a general security system, the three states—Czechoslovakia, Yugoslavia, and Rumania—will strengthen their own security and build up a policy of agreements for limited coöperation with other countries—*agreements which each country will make independently.*

This was interpreted in the official Rumanian newspaper in the following sense:

> Each of the three states has obtained the liberty to sign regional pacts independently of the other states, i. e., Czechoslovakia has the liberty and the right to deal with the Soviets, Rumania with Italy and Germany, Yugoslavia with Germany. We will not bind ourselves in one bloc or another.

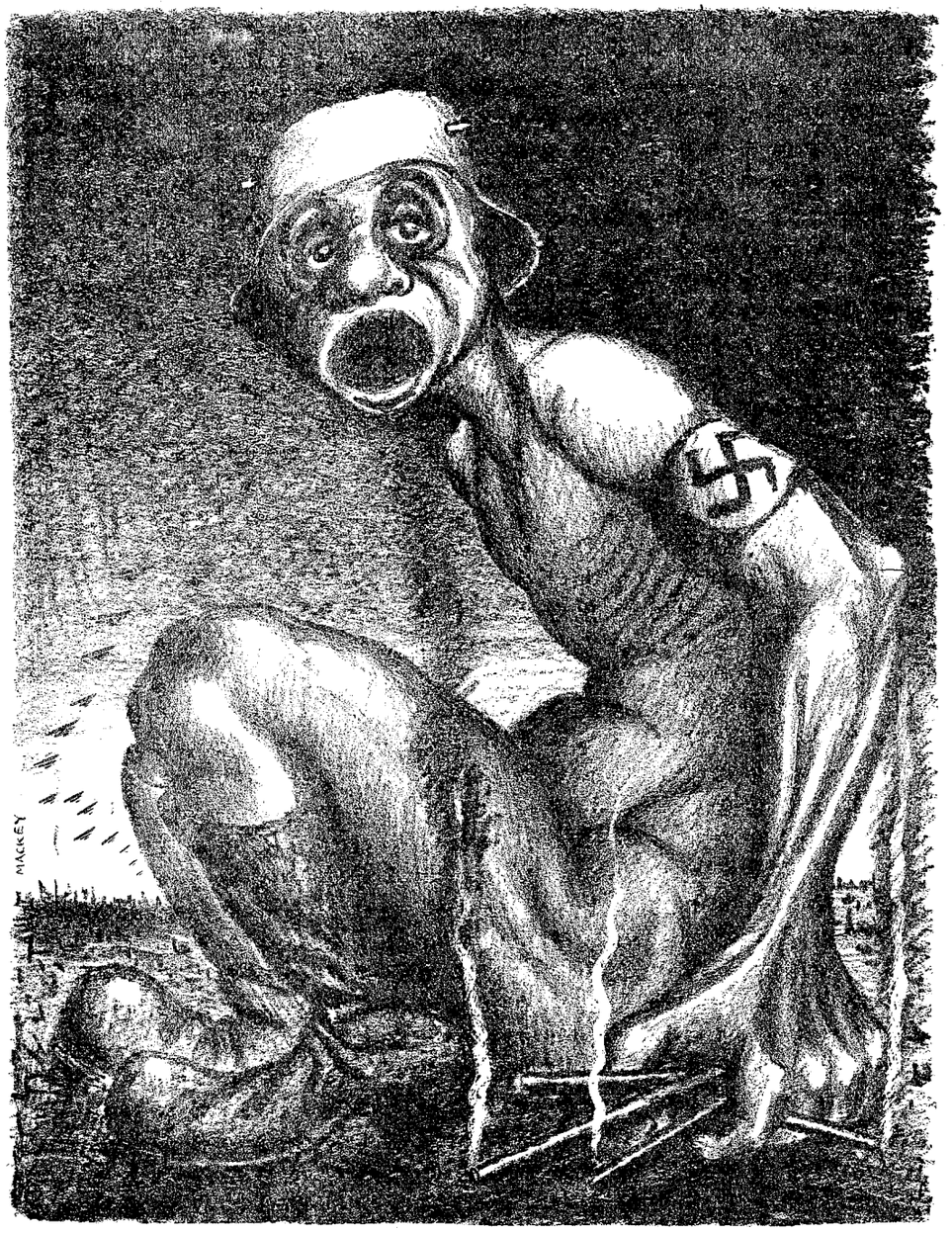
The Nazi pressure on Czechoslovakia increased from that time onwards, and at the end of October 1936, the king of Rumania, the Hohenzollern Carol, went to Prague to persuade the Czechoslovakian government to abandon its alliance with France and its pact with Soviet Russia.

Internal pressure also compelled the government to be extremely conciliatory, and to take steps which, had they been taken years ago, would have prevented much bitterness from ever having arisen. President Benes, in an important speech, stated that the Czechs had made many mistakes in their treatment of their German minority, which mistakes must never be repeated. He promised that all steps would be taken to remedy the Sudeten German grievances.

While refusing to listen to the "catchword of autonomy," he did promise decentralization and economic regionalism. Germans are to receive a full share of state employment, with the provision that a democratic state cannot entrust its confidential posts to fascists. The policy of bringing Czech workers into the German areas where unemployment is serious is to be reversed.

A similar offer to speed up the remedying of grievances was made by the premier, Hodza, to a deputation of Hungarians. The government has also more or less withdrawn the decree issued by Machnik, the minister of war, early in 1936, and intended as an instrument for the eviction of German employees in favor of Czechs.

How far President Benes will be able to withstand the German pressure remains to be seen. King Leopold II's repudiation of Belgium's League obligations on October 14, 1936, had serious repercussions in the countries of the Little Entente. It was commonly believed that the Belgian declaration was based on an assurance from Berlin that Germany's next war would be directed towards the east, and not towards the west, and that Belgium had accepted this assurance instead of depending on a collective-security system which was neither collective nor secure.



John Mackey

On the other hand, the independent stand taken by Poland under the strengthening leadership of its new inspector-general and head of state, Smigly-Rydz, placed Czechoslovakia in a much stronger position.

The Nazis counted on the support of Colonel Beck, but even he rejected publicly the German thesis of a Europe divided into "Powers of order" ranged against the "Powers of disorder"—Soviet Russia and her allies—and affirmed loyalty to League principles and general security in Europe. Poland is turning more towards Great Britain and France, and away from Nazi Germany. Hitler's attempts to win Warsaw away from France and over to the Berlin anti-Bolshevik front have not succeeded, despite the geographical proximity of Poland to the "hated enemy."

Tension between Germany and Poland, in fact, increased after the Greiser performance at Geneva, and the withdrawal of League protection from Danzig; while the Polish Corridor and Upper Silesia remain as fundamental sources of strife between Nazi Germany and Poland.

In these circumstances, Poland and Czechoslovakia are drawing closer together, and their coöperation, backed by assistance from France (whose money Poland is now using to mechanize her army), will be a formidable check to Nazi aggression in the east.

Meanwhile, Czechoslovakia is taking no risks. The Austrian frontier is being fortified, and strong fortifications are being constructed wherever Nazi Germany may attack, especially along the Oder and the Elbe. The country is being placed on a war footing. Vast reserves of food are being stored, and arrangements are being made even now for the evacuation of Prague when the Nazis strike.

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Artists in Action

The recent congress under the auspices of the Mexican L. E. A. R. reveals both a history of work done and a prospectus for the future

By Joseph Freeman

LIKE all semi-feudal, semi-colonial countries, Mexico has a heritage of mass illiteracy. Here, moreover, there is the problem of two cultures in conflict for about four centuries. The Indian, who constitutes the majority of the population, has retained his own outlook and his own language. Many villages do not speak Spanish, the official language of the republic, and until recently 80 percent of the nation has been illiterate in any kind of language.

This is what gave the book so little importance in the national life, and why painting has until now been the common national language. The murals of Orozco, Siqueiros, Rivera, and other Mexican painters brought the message of the 1910 revolution to the educated classes of the capital, who alone were in a position to visit the secretariat of education and the Palacio Nacional. Now the Cárdenas regime is bringing the printed word to the masses. Millions of textbooks have been printed, many of them influenced by socialist thought, for circulation among the peasants and their children. These books, well printed, beautifully illustrated by leading Mexican artists, are sold at cost: seven centavos, or less than two cents. Most of these books have been distributed free of charge to workers and peasants.

OUTSIDE of official education, which the department headed by Vasquez Vela carries on among the peasants and workers on one level, and among the middle classes on another, the trade unions have their own university, the Universidad Obrero, and their publications. The revolutionary viewpoint is also spread among the people by a group of writers and artists organized in the L.E.A.R. Originally, this was a small group in the capital, illegal as the Communist Party was illegal. In the fall of 1935, under the Cárdenas regime, it became not only a legal organization, but a far stronger one as a result of its merger with the Federation of Proletarian Writers and Artists, headed by the painter Reyes Perez, and the November group of Vera Cruz, led by the writers José Mancisidor, Alvaro Cordoba, Lorento Turent Rossa, and the painter Julio de la Fuente. Eventually, the L.E.A.R. founded a brilliant review called *Frente a Frente*. Under the influence of the painters, Leopoldo Mendez and David Alfaro Siqueiros and the writer Juan de la Cabada, it founded a collective art workshop. One of the most important achievements of the L.E.A.R. has been the influence, ideological and artistic, which it has won over various ministries and

The author as seen by the "Nacional," organ of the Cárdenas party.

organizations in which its artists, writers, and scientists are employed.

Perhaps the most striking achievement of the L.E.A.R. has been the Cultural Brigade. Nearly all the League's members are government employees. This is due in part to the particular role which the government plays in Mexico, and in part to the fact that the Mexican artist and writer cannot make a living working independently. As government employees, L.E.A.R. members get vacations with pay twice a year, ten days in May and ten in November.

In May of last year, a dozen L.E.A.R. members went to the agricultural exposition in Morelia, in the state of Michoacan. Thousands of workers, peasants, and middle-class people came from every part of the state to attend the exposition, and the L.E.A.R. Brigade found here an unusual opportunity for carrying revolutionary ideas to the people.

For eight days and eight nights the Cultural Brigade of the L.E.A.R. worked in Morelia. Every evening some of them gave lectures in the university on subjects like historical materialism, the film and fascism, progressive pedagogy, youth problems. They sold and gave away thousands of copies of revolutionary pamphlets, leaflets, magazines, and books. On four different occasions, they showed Soviet films free of charge to large audiences. They spoke at street meetings. And despite this concentrated work, the painters of the brigade managed in six days to paint murals on all the walls of the city's trade-union center, and to make huge paintings of Cárdenas and Morelos which were hung in the main street—on the walls of a church. During these eight hectic days, the brigadiers got little sleep, and when they did get some, it was on the floor of the university's main hall. They lived on 1.32 pesos a day per person. But their work was effective, and affected some 25,000 people at the Morelia fair.

Another L.E.A.R. brigade, this time consisting of fifteen men and women, went down in November to Guadelajara, in the State of Jalisco, the second largest city in Mexico. By this time, the League's work was so well known throughout the country that 3000 people met the brigade as it arrived at the railway station. In the Teatro Degollado, which the National Revolutionary Party placed at their disposal, they held meetings for ten nights. One of these meetings was devoted to the army, which in Mexico presents a special problem. An army officer spoke, saying that the army must be won for the people's front. Another evening, the Soviet film *The Youth of Maxim* was shown. A third evening was devoted to the problem of education. There was a youth evening, addressed by Marinello, who had been a school teacher in Cuba; and by the youth leaders of the state of Jalisco. The evening devoted to Spain was addressed by three Spanish *milicianos,* Cardidad Mercade of Catalonia, Ilena Imbert of the Basque province, and Juan Ruiz of Barcelona. Other evenings were devoted to problems of the working class, women, Indians. Revueltas gave a concert. Other members of the brigade spoke at the university of Guadelajara, the high schools, the museum. And one day, the entire brigade visited the local prison, and several of them, including the Spanish *milicianos,* spoke to the prisoners on the struggle against fascism.

THE League of Revolutionary Writers and Artists is thus an important organization in Mexico's national life. It had been planning to hold a national L.E.A.R. congress for some time, but the development of all liberal and revolutionary forces toward a people's front led to a modification of this idea. Instead of a national congress of the League alone, it was decided to convoke one of all Mexican intellectuals who were ready to unite

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on the common program outlined in the six points of the call. The basic program was one of struggle against fascism, imperialism, and war. It was also decided to invite several foreign delegates.

The week in which this national congress of intellectuals met, January 17 to 24, was one in which the Mexican Workers' Confederation (C.T.M.) executive met in Vera Cruz, the Communist Party congress convened in the capital, and President Cárdenas reaffirmed Mexico's determination to aid the Spanish people in their fight against fascism. Talk of a people's front against fascism, imperialism, and war was in the air. Under these circumstances, it was no surprise to find the press and the public giving the L.E.A.R. congress unusual attention.

The attitude of the government toward the congress intensified the general interest. Sessions were held in the Palacio de Bellas Artes, a government building. On the platform during the opening meeting, which the general public attended, was General Luis L. Rodriguez, secretary to Cárdenas and about to become governor of Guanejato; Chavez Orozco, Assistant Secretary of Education; various governors of states, left generals, senators and deputies. The stage was painted deep crimson, and the red plush seats in the orchestra were filled with intellectuals in mufti and workers in overalls. A uniformed band in the pit played the national hymn of Mexico as the audience and the presidium stood up, and followed this with the "International," which the entire audience sang with raised, clenched fists. The short, stocky, curly-haired chairman, Sylvestre Revueltas, whose heavy dark face is scarred, then introduced Juan Marinello of Cuba.

This was typical of the congress. The foreign delegates were honored in a way which not only typified Mexican courtesy, but expressed the sense of international solidarity which marks the Mexican intellectuals, workers, and peasants. Marinello outlined the aims of the congress. Analyzing the present historic period, he said that this moment, "belligerent and strategic," was no time in which to discuss the goodness of our cause, but only the best way to defend it. He pointed out that this congress was made up of 890 delegates who ranged from members of the Communist Party to orthodox liberals. The honesty of men, he said, was the sole condition for participating in the congress, for this was enough, in our time, to enable us to find the right road. Speaking of the role of the artist and writer in our epoch, Marinello said that it is their obligation to search for the truth in the most profound realities surrounding us, and to help awaken the masses so that they may "transform the deepest suffering into the most perfect liberty."

I spoke next, greeting the congress in the name of the League of American Writers and the NEW MASSES, and emphasizing the influence which the Mexican revolution has had upon liberals and revolutionaries in the United States.

Hernan Laborde, general secretary of the Communist Party, who spoke next, was greeted with tumultuous applause. He spoke on the Marxist interpretation of art, and the necessity for closer contact between the artist and the masses of the people. He was followed by Gilberto Bosquez, head of the press department of the National Revolutionary Party, who read a paper on art and society.

THE HIGH point of the opening session came when Waldo Frank rose to speak in Spanish. Few of us in the United States have any idea of the love and admiration which Latin Americans have for this North American writer. From the moment of his arrival in Mexico City, he was the literary hero of the capital. All the papers ran interviews with him on their front pages, with photos and streamer headlines. There are a number of reasons for Frank's popularity among Latin American intellectuals. To begin with, his literary roots are in the literatures of France and Spain, which still influence Latin America. He has written about both those countries, and his general outlook approaches that of the Latin intellectuals. His books have been translated into Spanish, so that his work is more widely known here than that of most North American writers. But there are even more important reasons, I think, for his enormous popularity here. He is that rare exception among our own intellectuals who loves and seeks to understand the semi-colonial countries under the heel of Yankee imperialism.

It was as an old friend and a North American thinker with anti-imperialist sentiments that Waldo Frank was wildly applauded as he rose to speak at the opening session of the L.E.A.R. congress. The following day, his speech, which lasted nearly an hour, appeared verbatim in the press of the capital.

Frank raised the central questions of the L.E.A.R. congress. In this long seige of war, what role shall be ours as artists and writers? The problem, he said, is complex, and he therefore confined himself to a few basic propositions. "We must declare and enact our loyalty to the working classes, being ourselves workers," he said. "We must sharpen this loyalty by declaring open although impersonal war . . . on the exploiters. We must offer every sacrifice in Spain, in order to balance as best we can the preponderance of gold and steel and cruel cunning that murder the Spanish folk. And we must prepare for like crises in our own countries, by disciplined alliance with the vanguard of the workers, in order to be ready as they were ready in Spain: Garcia Lorca, Alberti, María Theresa Leon, José Bergamin, Leon Felipe, Casals, Picasso—hosts of other artists."

Woodcut by A. Morado

This, Frank said, is the duty of the artist as a man or a woman. But what of the artist's duty as a worker, which means as an artist? Art, he explained, is the means whereby the individual experiences his organic connection with life; in great art, with the whole of life. There is a great name for this experience that comes from the loving acceptance of one's integral share in the necessary whole: that name is freedom. All social revolution is but the creating of the means to the enjoyment of this freedom. The experience of art is the means to the recognition of what freedom is, to its naturalization as a value—as the supreme value—in the individual lives that make up the social body. Art brings to human lives, by the familiar terms and materials of everyday existence, the experience of freedom. The artist might be called the minister of freedom. Marx was wonderfully right in his view of the destiny of the proletariat, whose energy and will and position configure to make them the destroyers, in alliance with other workers, of class society—which means economic slavery—forever. In this basic doctrine, as in others, Frank said, he considered himself a Marxist. But Marxism, he went on to say, is an organic view of history which demands the collaboration of the artist. Here indeed was the dialectical relation that must be maintained between the revolutionary worker and the revolutionary artist. "If we artists," he concluded, "do our work in dialectical conjunction with the workers, our revolution must release into birth a new kind of world."

This speech created a profound impression upon the delegates and spectators in the Palace of Fine Arts. The following day, Omega, the fascist organ here, in a big front-page blast, attacked Waldo Frank as a Jew and a Communist who could never compete for the world's attention with such geniuses as Hitler and Mussolini.

After the opening session on January 17, Mexico's first national congress of liberal and revolutionary intellectuals spent seven days in the practical work of the various commissions into which the delegates were divided. There were six of these devoted respectively to the plastic arts, the sciences, literature, music, education, and the theater and film. Since the Mexicans are predominantly a plastic people, the art commission was subdivided into smaller groups devoted to murals, the graphic arts, carricature, photography, and architecture. This

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group arranged an exhibit in one of the main halls of the Palacio de Bellas Artes, where the visitors were addressed by Leopoldo Mendez and Joe Jones, left-wing St. Louis painter.

Jones greeted the audience in the name of two North American organizations which he represented, the American Artists' Congress, and the American Friends of the Mexican People. "No artist in the United States worthy of the name," he said, "is ignorant of the tremendous influence which the artists of Mexico have had in the development of present-day culture and the fight against reaction. . . . The significance of this congress, therefore, is one which transcends the borders of Mexico and the North American continent. It is no exaggeration to say that this congress marks another great advance along the highway that the workers, farmers, and intellectuals are building toward peace, freedom, and prosperity. The artists of my country realize this; they are proud to be represented here." Jones then explained the work of the American Artists' Congress and the Artists' Union. He appealed to all artists everywhere "to rediscover the social functions of art, to organize themselves in the fight for better conditions, to ally themselves with the progressive forces of the world in the building of a strong people's front against war, fascism, and imperialism."

The United States had eight representatives at the L.E.A.R. congress. These were Waldo Frank, Joe Jones, the painter Stefan Hirsch; Elsa Roggo, an art instructor at Bennington, Vt.; the painter Seymour Paul of California and his wife; Zoe Koenig, a Los Angeles poet; Gerald Briggs, a California painter; Charmion von Wiegand of Art Front; Leon Fields of the Artists' Union, and myself.

BY THE END of the week, the Permanent Commission established by the congress was able to report definite conclusions to the delegates assembled in plenary session. The literary commission proposed steps for developing the revolutionary folk-tale, common among the workers and peasants of Mexico since 1910. The commission on education made proposals for furthering socialist teaching. On the basis of this report, the congress as a whole endorsed a resolution demanding the teaching of scientific socialism in the schools of the republic. Another resolution called for the unification of the various teachers' organizations. The scientific commission urged that Marxism be made the central idea of scientific education conducted by the congress. In connection with music, various technical and organizational proposals were embodied in several resolutions. These urged the development of a real symphony orchestra in Mexico; the further development of people's choruses; the improvement of radio programs; and called for better conditions for the military bands, whose members are paid as low as sixty centavos a day. In the absence of a theoretical tradition in this country, all problems concerning the formation of a theater were relegated to the permanent commission. Similar action was taken in regard to the film. Mexican movies are now in the hands of a reactionary group which attempted to control the film section of the L.E.A.R. This attempt was frustrated at the congress.

At its closing sessions, the congress as a whole voted to organize a unified trade union of intellectual workers to be known as Sindicato Unico de Trabajadores Intelectuales. It also voted to establish a center to be known as the Casa de Intelectuales, or House of Intellectuals. Another resolution called for the establishment of a book-publishing venture by the congress to be known as Mexico Nuevo. This is especially important, since Mexico today has no publishers, and books are issued either by the Secretariat of Education, the trade unions, the political parties, the L.E.A.R., or printed privately by the authors.

While the commissions were in session, the press, especially the *Nacional,* organ of the Cárdenas party, published long reports of the proceedings, interviews with foreign delegates, and speeches delivered at the opening session. One evening, the leading radio station owned by the National Revolutionary Party broadcast a dialogue between Juan Marinello, Waldo Frank, and a speech, this time in Spanish, by me. Interest in the congress was heightened by the announcement that Marcelino Domingo, special envoy of Spain, and the first minister of education under the republic, would attend some sessions.

That same evening, the L.E.A.R. ran a dance at its headquarters. It was there that I met for the first time the Cuban poet, Nicolas Guillen. I had heard a great deal about him from Arnold Reid, of the NEW MASSES staff, who had spent some time in Cuba. Guillen, whose beautiful Negro head, sensitive, strong, passionate, is so young that it belies his thirty-four years, spoke in a rich voice, asked about his American friends, particularly Langston Hughes. The following day, I heard him speak at the final session of the congress.

When the chairman called on him, the audience rose in tumultuous applause. He read his speech in a voice vibrant with feeling; he spoke of Cuba's battle for liberty; of its solidarity with the other Latin American countries; of his desire to work with all those who fight against imperialism, Reaction, and war. It was when that speech was over, and Nicolas Guillen tried to retire to his seat, that the most dramatic episode of the congress took place. The audience rose in spontaneous cheers and shouted to Guillen to recite some of his verses. Voices even named the verses.

"Say the one to the soldier!"

"To the Negro worker!"

Other speakers followed Guillen, and I don't know how they were able to utter a word after the enthusiasm which the Cuban poet stirred; yet somehow, Marcelino Domingo managed to move the audience to even greater heights of feelings. Small, delicate, his pale skin almost hidden behind huge spectacles, the Spanish writer began to speak in a voice so quiet that the audience strained forward to catch his words. Within ten minutes, this delicate playwright was an elemental force, voicing the aspirations of democratic Spain.

"Spain," he said among other things, "belongs not to the Spaniards alone, but to the whole world. By its heroic conduct, Spain has become the spiritual fatherland of all men of spirit. Spain is now a universal conscience."

Marcelino Domingo is a left Republican and—as the Spanish ambassador said, speaking after him—"my co-religionist," i.e. a Catholic. Yet this same week, speaking at the opening of the sixth national congress of the Communist Party, Domingo testified that in Spain the Communists are not only heroically fighting with the people, but are the most sincere, the most honest, the most trustworthy of all political groups.

Woodcut by E. Ramirez

THE FIRST national congress of Mexican intellectuals has closed, but its real work is just beginning. It was a historic event in the culture of the Americas. Thanks to the revolutionary traditions of Mexico, to the liberal policies of the Cárdenas regime, to the progressive character of the trade unions and the growing influence of the Communist Party here, the congress achieved a broad united front of Mexican intellectuals. The presence of delegates from Cuba, Peru, and the United States raised the question of closer collaboration among the liberal and revolutionary intellectuals of all the American countries. One of the most important resolutions of the congress provides for the convocation of a Pan-American congress of progressive artists, writers, and scientists some time this year in Mexico City. A committee to organize such a congress was appointed, and has already started its work. It plans to invite not only Canadian, North American, and Latin American intellectuals, but Europeans like Einstein, Ernst Toller, and Romain Rolland. Such a congress is expected to unite the most advanced intellectuals of the western hemisphere into one powerful body whose collective voice, raised high in the defense of culture and peace, would be heard not only across the two continents of the new world, but would carry across the seas to the old.

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Covering the News

Covering the events of the week ending February 15, 1937

AMERICAN labor won its second major victory of 1937 (the first was the West Coast maritime workers' ninety-nine day strike) when the United Automobile Workers wrested a hard-earned agreement from General Motors after forty-four days of a spectacular and effective sit-down strike. Bearded workers marched out of the huge Flint plants, happy in the knowledge that the company had recognized their union as the collective bargaining agency in twenty plants for a period of six months. Injunction proceedings were dropped, union members were conceded the right to wear union insignia at work, and a wage increase for all employees of five cents an hour was announced. But most important, a conference was scheduled at which union and General Motors officials planned to discuss the grievances that precipitated the strike: questions of wages, hours, piece-work, reinstatement of workers discharged for union activities, speed-up, stretch-out, and seniority rights. All these points were prominently featured in U. A. W. President Homer Martin's letter of January 4 to General Motors (see page 11)—a letter which company officials had ignored in their effort to make the "illegal occupation of plants" the major issue of the conflict.

Indicative of the increased respect for the union assumed by auto barons, were announcements that the Chrysler corporation had increased wages by 10-percent and Packard by five cents an hour. Henry Ford was reported "not opposed" to the wearing of union buttons by workers in his plants. But the victory also had the effect of enraging anti-union groups, notably the police and city administration of Anderson, Ind. Military rule prevailed in that community following the shooting of ten union workers, two seriously, on Saturday morning by a group of scabs and thugs employed by General Motors. Gunfire was opened on union men from windows of a south-side tavern notorious as a scab hangout. A caravan of Flint union workers, bound by auto for Anderson, was turned back at the county line by state troopers, who permitted only "safe" persons to cross the border. Meanwhile, Victor Reuther and B. J. Widdick, Anderson union organizers, in a telegram to President Roosevelt, charged Indiana's Governor Townsend with "refusing to guarantee our members their inherent rights and civil liberties," called the martial law situation "a mockery of the General Motors strike settlement," and declared it was "curbing union functioning and organization."

While civil liberties were trodden underfoot in Anderson, the LaFollette subcommittee investigating labor espionage found General Motors the largest client of the Pinkerton National Detective Agency. The auto corporation, it was disclosed, paid the Pinkertons $419,000 for services rendered between January 1934 and July 1936. Chief Robert A. Pinkerton said that General Motors had "discontinued the service" in 1936, but admitted his spies had been in the occupied auto plants among the strikers. His refusal to divulge their names laid him open to charges of contempt.

UNDETERRED by spies, and jubilant after the victory, Flint headquarters of the United Automobile Workers was packed after the termination of the strike with crowds of workers applying for membership in the union. Many explained their late applications by saying they had been fearful of their jobs before the strike settlement was announced. Others were hitching themselves to the growing union as "a sure thing." In New York, touring C.I.O field secretary Leo Krzycki predicted 90 percent unionization in auto at the end of six months, and plans were afoot in Flint to establish local U.A.W. headquarters in every town boasting a General Motors plant.

But the victory was not without its croaking chorus. William Green, A. F. of L. president, sought to minimize the triumph, to console General Motors, and to reassure the supporters of his untenable position by declaring unctuously that "the whole of labor was injured" by the strike settlement. And face-saver John P. Frey, "chief back-biter of the American labor movement," joined Green in describing the settlement as a "complete abandonment by John L. Lewis of all his major demands." Condemning Green and Frey "for their "gratuitous, insulting, anti-union, strike-breaking statements," the policy committee of the United Mine Workers adopted a resolution empowering their international officers to expel Green from the union.

Esther Krlger

Green—Croaking Chorus Boy.

Interviewed on C.I.O. plans, Lewis told reporters in Detroit that unionization of the steel industry would be the organization's next big objective. Describing steel as "a crouching lion in the pathway of labor," Lewis declared: "I hope that the U. S. Steel Corporation will approach the problem of union recognition in a rational and constructive way. I do not know what they will do. I know what they said they would do last July in their full-page advertisements. I do not know if their fingers were crossed then. I am willing to learn."

Reports from Pittsburgh revealed that the present membership of the Steel Workers' Organizing Committee was 128,000 and that 200 lodges were functioning. The impetus of the auto victory was expected to boost these totals to 250 lodges and 200,000 members by March, when a convention call is expected. Chairman Philip Murray of the Steel Workers' Organizing Committee announced that two important developments had given the steel unionization campaign new impetus: (1) the U.A.W. victory, and (2) the net profits of $141,000,000 made by twenty leading steel companies during 1936. "Industrial unions," Murray added, "are now firmly entrenched in automobiles, glass, rubber, coal, and many smaller industries. Unionism is rapidly being established in the steel industry. There is nothing that can stop us now."

A further significant labor gain was made when the Amalgamated Clothing Workers of America, a C.I.O. affiliate, approved the terms of a new nation-wide three-year contract for the clothing industry. The agreement included a 12-percent wage increase for the union's 135,000 workers (or $30,000,000 annually), and the retention of the thirty-six-hour week.

FACED with this swiftly rising tide of labor's power, President Roosevelt appeared more determined than ever to meet the situation by legislation designed to mitigate the most flagrant abuses of American capitalism. Blocking the way was the Supreme Court, and the presidential week was accordingly one long series of conferences on ways and means of dealing with that obstacle. Roosevelt remained insistent on his proposal to replace members of the Supreme Court who are past seventy or, in the event of their refusal to retire, to add a corresponding number of new justices to the bench.

Less far-sighted in their desire to maintain the present social order, reactionaries laid down a terrific barrage against the Roosevelt plan, which they hysterically pictured to the country as a vicious attempt to destroy the American system of government. Letters and telegrams urging Congressmen to oppose the plan poured in on Washington in such volume that several recipients were moved to recall

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the flood of "inspired" mail and faked telegrams that deluged the Capitol last year, when the drastic curb on utility holding companies was under consideration. Frank Gannett, of the Gannett newspaper chain, alone sent out 35,000 letters to individuals asking them to wire or write a protest to their congressmen.

Nor was this strategy without telling effect. At this writing, twenty-nine senators are in open opposition to the Roosevelt plan, thirty-three are reported in favor, and thirty-four are uncommitted, reported as having indicated that they are "awaiting a more adequate reaction from the country." Unfortunately, the flood of reactionary protest engulfed several outstanding Senate liberals, namely, Borah, Johnson (Cal.), Clark, and Wheeler, with Norris apparently willing to follow the President with some misgivings. In refreshing contrast was the reaction of Senator LaFollette, who issued a challenge to the protesting Republicans, citing Lincoln's denunciation of the Court's usurpation of power. Attacking the "economic royalists, the Liberty League lawyers and their bar associations," the Wisconsin senator declared: "But when the court substitutes for the will of the people of this country its own will; when it supplants the prevailing economic theory with its own theory of days gone by; when it decrees that it is beyond the power of the people to meet the national needs —then it has become a dictator and we have succumbed to a fascist system of control."

Leaders in the House made an attempt to side-track the question by rushing through the Sumners bill, offering justices over seventy a chance to retire on full pay, obviously with the hope that a few of the old justices would swallow the bait and thus allow Roosevelt to "remake" the Court without so much fanfare. This approach was not taken seriously as a way out, since judges who had refused to retire when challenged could hardly do so with a newly voted pension dangling before their eyes.

WHILE the Court was uppermost in the national mind, the question of its fate did not completely stall the Washington machinery. The House voted to extend for three years the grant of power to the President to negotiate reciprocal trade treaties with foreign countries, passed an amendment to the infamous "Red rider" which was attached to the last appropriation bill for the District of Columbia, and witnessed the introduction of an "American Youth Act" (see p. 21). The Red rider, which demanded an oath by Washington school teachers to the effect that during the month they had neither taught nor advocated communism, was changed to a prohibition merely against the advocacy of communism, and the oath requirement as a prerequisite of collecting the month's salary was dropped. In the course of discussion on the amendment, Representative Gasque (D., S.C.) hit this low level for congressional decency: "Let us note some of those who have advocated the repeal of the Red rider: . . . Fifth, the Communist-aiding press; that is to say, the sections of the public press which

Robert Russin

persist in terming the Spanish Reds 'loyalists.'" The Youth Act, which was introduced in the Senate by Lundeen (F.-L., Minn.) and in the House by Maverick (D., Tex.) and Voorhis (D., Calif.), calls for an appropriation of $500,000,000 to provide special public works projects for persons between the ages of sixteen and twenty-five.

Between earnest consultations on the Court, Roosevelt managed to sign the woefully inadequate relief bill passed by Congress in the preceding week, to submit a long-time drought program to the Capitol, which served at the moment to ease tension over the judiciary battle, and to receive a long report from his committee on farm tenancy, which had just completed an eleven-week investigation. Pointing out the alarming fact that less than half of American farmers own the land they work, the committee warned that "rural civilization is threatened with decadence," and described "a standard of living below any level of decency." "In many areas, particularly in the South," the report said, "families are living in conditions of poverty little, if any, above the lowest peasantry of Europe."

EXCEPT for battle-scarred Spain, Europe passed a comparatively uneventful week. The cause of Spanish democracy took an undeniable turn for the worse when an army which even the Rome press admitted was largely Italian took the loyalist port of Malaga. To such a low estate had the London Non-Intervention Committee fallen, that Stefani, the official Italian news agency, boasted that Italian troops formed the backbone of the attacking forces and were chiefly responsible for Franco's rapid southern advance. The main body of the loyalist army, surrounded on three sides and bombarded from the air, retreated eastward to join other government troops in a projected offensive against the captured port. Tales that the road between Madrid and Valencia had been cut off were proved false, and slight government gains were recorded in the area of the capital. While the loss of Malaga was admittedly a severe blow, military strategists regarded it as no more significant than the earlier capture of Irun, and there was a good chance that indirectly it would work to the government's advantage. Like other fascist victories in the Spanish struggle, it resulted in an immediate stiffening of loyalist morale and a keener awareness of what was yet to be done, and, equally important, it furthered the sentiment for a unified command. Recognizing this demand, the Spanish government announced the appointment of José Miaja, who headed the Madrid defense junta, as generalissimo of loyalist forces on the entire central front.

Taking advantage of a quiet international week, Great Britain rattled the saber for all to hear. Before an astounded Parliament, Chancellor of the Exchequer Chamberlain asked a $2,000,000,000 loan for armaments, to be added to the $5,000,000,000 already allotted in Britain's five-year rearmament program. And First Lord of the Admiralty Samuel Hoare flung out this challenge: "Let the other countries of the world mark the determined efforts we are making to put our defense in order. . . . Though we may be slow in starting, we have a remarkable way of eventually finding ourselves at the winning post."

THE smaller countries of Europe, faced with a choice between aligning themselves with a war-bent Germany and a Soviet Union which they know wants peace, showed indications of moving toward the latter. Finnish Foreign Minister Rudolf Holsti made a good-will visit to Moscow, during which "good neighbor" relations were discussed. The trip was regarded as one of a series of steps looking toward the formation of a north-European pro-Soviet and anti-war bloc, which might well prove a barrier to German hopes of an attack on the U.S.S.R. by way of the Baltic. In line with this program, Marshal Yegoroff, chief of the Soviet general staff, left Moscow for a series of visits to each of the Baltic capitals in return for visits to the Soviet capital previously paid by Lithuanian, Latvian, and Esthonian leaders. Finland's anti-fascist trend was further indicated by the election to the presidency of Kyosti Kallio of the Agrarian party, which advocates amity with the Soviet Union. Kallio had labor support, and his election is regarded as the beginning of a labor-agrarian coalition.

Plans were made known during the week for the reorganization of the Polish state along definitely fascist lines, with a grand council similar to Mussolini's, toleration of only one party, and the placing of full authority in the hands of Marshal Smigly-Rydz. "Polonization" of the country, it was indicated, would be accomplished by making Poles the "ruling nation," but minorities were expected to retain the "rights of citizens." Open anti-Semitism was not included in the prospective program of the National Party, which is expected, however, to work toward eventual mass emigration of Polish Jews. In general the program appeared to be deliberately designed to appeal to Polish youth by stealing the thunder of the growing Nazi elements.

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What Caused the G. M. Strike?

Challenging an industrial giant involves more than mere whim on the part of the rank and file

By Harry Weiss

THE genuine and important victory gained by the automobile workers in their forty-four-day strike, as embodied in the agreement which eased the tension in troop-ridden Flint, has again focused the attention of the nation upon the fundamental issues of this grueling conflict. These were the issues which the General Motors Corporation avoided before the strike (thereby causing it) by refusing to negotiate with the United Automobile Workers; and which it continued to evade by attempting to make the occupation of plants by strikers the major point of dispute.

The text of the agreement between the union and General Motors provides, among other matters, for a series of negotiations on these issues, all of which were included in the letter sent by Homer Martin, union president, to General Motors chiefs as far back as January 4. To repeat all of these points is unnecessary. They are important, but are overshadowed by the main issue, now won by the U.A.W.: the right to represent the workers in negotiations. Long before the strike occurred, the workers asked General Motors Corporation to discuss their grievances with the object of correcting them by mutual agreement. The officials of General Motors refused to confer with the union representatives, insisting that any grievances the workers might have should be taken up with managers of local plants. This refusal to negotiate nationally must be judged in relation to the later admission that most of the demands raised by the union could only be dealt with by General Motors. These demands were: (1) right to represent General Motors workers in collective bargaining; (2) abolition of the speed-up; (3) end of the piece-work system; (4) a thirty-hour week; (5) a minimum-wage agreement; (6) maintenance of seniority rights; (7) reinstatement of all workers discharged for union activities.

The union found it necessary to call a strike in order to force General Motors to negotiate. The strike would not have occurred had General Motors agreed to bargain with representatives of a substantial number of its workers. In view of the fact that there was no rival organization which claimed to speak for the workers, that was the basic issue.

Nothing must obscure the fact that it was the original refusal of General Motors to bargain with the union which precipitated the sit-down strikes. Furthermore, nothing must obscure the fact that these strikes represented genuine discontent of many years standing in the automobile industry. These grievances were brought to national attention in an official government report made public by the President just two years ago.*

This report urged that the grievances of the automobile workers were serious and justified. It pointed out that these grievances were felt just as keenly by unorganized workers as by the workers of Flint. The report included a summary of the testimony of more than 500 automobile workers who appeared before government representatives.† Despite the fact that representatives of employers questioned the reliability of such testimony, it should be remembered that it was given in confidence to a government representative and that it was taken down in shorthand by an official government reporter. Can anyone doubt that testimony given under those circumstances must have been honest testimony? Much of it was corroborated, moreover, by the studies which were made public as part of the Henderson Report.

It is interesting to review the testimony presented to government representatives two years ago. It throws considerable light on the workers' demands. Testimony was collected in thirteen automobile centers. It was received from workers in all the major establishments of the industry; from young and old, men and women, organized and unorganized. They came to tell what was wrong with working conditions, and how they might be improved. The almost universal cry was: "We can't stand the pace." Everywhere workers told the same story: increased production required and fewer men to do the job. When one thinks of the term "speed-up," one generally visualizes a belt conveyor whose speed of motion is gradually accelerated without increasing the number of men working on the conveyor line. There were many complaints about this type of speed-up. According to the testimony, there is no set speed for a conveyor line even after production has been pushed up to what is considered the maximum. If the line is forced to stop for any reason, it is customary to increase the speed to make up for lost time. The workers contended that they could not go to the toilet or even get a drink of water. They charged that even in the case of injuries, men had to stay on the job for hours before they could get relief.

But the speeding up of the line is only one type of speed-up. It is present even on non-conveyor jobs. The simplest form of speed-up is the urge of foremen to produce more. The fear of lay-off can be planted in the workers' minds without specific words to that effect. The speed-up is present on individual machines as well. The number of revolutions at which the machine is operated can sometimes be increased. And closely related to the speed-up is the "stretchout," the practice of requiring a worker to tend more machines.

Speed-up is also achieved through piece-work methods of payment. Even without pressure, the necessity of getting a year's income out of six to nine months of work drives the men to their utmost speed. If, by driving himself, a man succeeds in producing more than the rate-setter considers normal, his rate is reduced so that he is where he was before he drove himself to unusual efforts. He has, of course, to maintain those unusual efforts in order to earn the lower wage. Abolition of the piece-work system has been one of the workers' principal demands.

Darryl Frederick

Another demand is the establishment of strict rules for the conduct of lay-offs and rehiring. The workers feel that years of service should be the sole criterion for determining the order of lay-offs and rehiring. Any discretionary power in the hands of management means an opportunity to discriminate against union members and in favor of "company-union representatives" and "foremen's pets." The rules developed by the late but unlamented Automobile Labor Board permitted consideration of several factors, including dependency. This gave the foreman sufficient latitude to discriminate against active union men in a large number of cases.

The achievement of strict seniority rules will do nothing, of course, for the older workers who no longer get work in the industry. Many of them testified before the N.R.A. representatives in the two busy days they spent at Flint, Michigan. They had service records of ten, twenty, and thirty years; often in one plant and occasionally in the same department of a single plant. Their stories were always the same. After many years of preference in hiring, there came a time—for many of them in the first years of the depression—when they began to be laid off early, and were taken back only during the best months of the year. That occurred for several years, and then they were not taken back at all. Rarely were they told

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* Preliminary Report on Study of Employment and Improvement of Labor Conditions in the Automobile Industry, made by Research and Planning Division of N.R.A., Jan. 23, 1935. Generally known as Henderson report.

† Contained in Appendix 19, *ibid.*

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that they were too old or that they were not to be called; merely that they would be called when needed. But they were never needed. Occasionally, a friendly foreman may have warned him with a "John, you're slowing up."

These men are doomed to idleness. When they ask for work elsewhere, they are asked where they worked last. When they say "Fisher No. 1" or "Chevy," they are told to go back there for a job. They have fifteen or twenty years of life ahead of them in many cases. Their savings, if any, can last but a year or two. A few may be fortunate in having grown children to take care of them. The only hope for the remainder is a meager old-age pension.

GRIEVANCES of this sort are seldom thought to be adequate ground for a strike. If the wages are high and the hours not too long, it is thought that workers ought to be reasonably satisfied. It is true that hourly earnings are relatively higher, compared to their depression levels. In fact, a Bureau of Labor Statistics study indicates that by 1935, hourly earnings had recovered to the 1928 levels.* It is also true that average weekly earnings have increased substantially since the depths of the depression. The same study indicates an increase from the low point of $15.44 in March 1933 to $23.95 in the same month of 1935. Recent figures indicate a further increase to $28.23 in September 1936. This does not mean that hourly and weekly earnings are as high as they should be. Since 1928, there have been remarkable increases in automobile productivity. It takes far fewer men to produce a car. Many of the workers who appeared before the N.R.A. representatives gave vivid illustrations of technological improvements and their effects. They did not object to those improvements. They felt, however, that part of the gains from those improvements should have been passed on through higher earnings, and that hours should have been reduced so as to reabsorb some of the displaced workers.

More important is the fact that auto workers do not live on hourly and weekly earnings. Food must be eaten all year around if the worker is to be available for work. Rent must be paid every month. Yet almost half of the male automobile workers received less than forty weeks employment in the year 1934. Twelve weeks and more of playless living! The result is to be seen in data on annual earnings rather than weekly earnings. One quarter of the men received less than $590 in 1934 from the automobile plants. Obviously, the figures for 1936 would be substantially higher, but still far below what we term a living wage. One might think that supplementary earnings could be made from other sources during the lean months. But the facts show that such earnings are of extremely small amounts. One reason for this is that the automobile worker must be at the beck and call of his company. He never knows when he will be called back. And he must be ready to respond at a moment's notice if he wants to keep his job. In other words, the industry wants the workers to be available all year. That is why the automobile workers feel the industry should guarantee them an annual wage.

Two Women Painting by A. Harritan

Along with a guaranteed annual wage, the automobile workers are striving for a thirty-hour week. There is a tendency to ridicule this demand, even though spokesmen for the Ford Motor Company imply that it is coming soon. Some spokesmen for the industry point out very proudly that the hours of work do not average much above 40 a week in peak periods, and more typically average about 35 hours a week. Thus in 1934, factory employees in automobile manufacturing averaged 40.5 hours in March and 31.7 in November. But these averages tend to hide the actual situation: namely, that thousands of workers on various jobs work extremely long hours during certain periods of the year. Because the peak periods vary widely from job to job, the average is brought down by other groups. Of even more significance in the demand for a thirty-hour week is the fact pointed out above, that technological improvements—as well as speed-up—are displacing thousands of workers for whom a place must be found in our economy. If the thirty-hour week is a possible voluntary move on the part of a large automobile manufacturer, it certainly must be a proper subject for serious collective-bargaining negotiations.

BY no means do these grievances constitute the total. One could go on with a discussion of lack of safety devices in some of the smaller plants; deductions from wages for company welfare schemes which are administered by the company and are developed principally for advertising; the necessity of coming in early and using the lunch period for getting materials ready for work; discriminations practiced by foremen in favor of company union representatives and against bona fide labor organization men; substitution of women for men at a lower pay; and a host of other things. Enough has been said to indicate that the automobile workers' strike is a response to genuine grievances felt by the rank-and-file worker as well as by the union officials.

If that is the case, one might well ask, why it was that only a small minority of workers appeared to have gone out on strike, while a large majority were apparently hostile. The answer is that appearances were deceitful, despite the newspaper reports of Mr. Russell R. Porter of the New York *Times*, and others. The readers of the New York *Times* should be given words of caution. It must be remembered that Flint is a community which depends on General Motors for its existence. The effect of this situation on business men, many of whom are General Motors stockholders, must be apparent to any intelligent person. There is plenty of evidence to indicate that the Flint Alliance was dominated by these business men together with lesser officials of General Motors. One cannot conclude, as Mr. Porter does as a result of one mass meeting to which all citizens were invited, that "the overwhelming majority of the 43,000 General Motors employees . . . are opposed to the strike."

One must also note the testimony now being presented to the LaFollette Committee on the extensive use of labor spies by automobile manufacturing companies. That the industry is honeycombed with spies is a revelation to the nation, but a well-known fact to automobile workers. Many of them feared even to give confidential testimony to a representative of the federal government two years ago. One cannot reasonably expect them to indicate to Mr. Porter that they are sympathetic to the strike, even though they may sign petitions demanding the right to work, and, at the invitation of their foreman, attend a mass meeting.

IN THE LIGHT of these basic and chronic grievances, the automobile strike was of extreme importance not only for automobile workers, but for the entire labor movement in its struggle to establish the right and the principles of collective bargaining. The clear-cut victory has already become a tremendous stimulus to labor organizations; it has demonstrated that concentrated capital in the basic industries is far from invulnerable.

By the same token, it has thrown into sharp outline, for all workers to see, the difference between the C.I.O. policy and that of the old-line leadership under William Green. Green's employer-serving squawk about a "stinging defeat" proclaims its own significance for what it is: the panicky voice of desperation—the desperation of bankruptcy.

* Published in *Monthly Labor Review* of the U. S. Dept. of Labor, March 1936, pp. 521-553.

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What I Saw in Moscow

The only English barrister to attend the most recent trials gives his impressions in an article which we reprint from the London Daily Herald

By Dudley Collard

Of important bearing on the charges of "frame-up" aimed at the most recent Moscow trials is the following eye-witness account published in the London *Daily Herald* on January 28. The *Daily Herald* is the official organ of the British Labor Party and has maintained an editorial policy extremely hostile to the Soviet leadership in general, and the Kamenev-Zinoviev trial of last August in particular. An editorial note prefixed to the article stated that the author was "the only English barrister attending the trial, member of the Executive of the National Council for Civil Liberties and the Howard League for Penal Reform, and fluent Russian scholar." Mr. Collard's reactions to the Radek-Piatakov trial correspond to the reactions of D. N. Pritt to last August's trial. The *Daily Herald* at that time refused to publish Pritt's testimony on the fairness of the trial.—THE EDITORS.

I HAVE waited for five days before making any comment on the trial, as I desired to get a thorough grasp of the facts.

I am following it independently and studying it from a legal, rather than a political, viewpoint.

While I have a general knowledge of Soviet law and procedure and have frequently visited the People's Courts, this is the first political trial at which I have been present.

I attended the opening session with many stories of Soviet "frame-ups" in my mind, and as I watched the seventeen accused men file into the dock for the first time knowing—as they must have done—that they were facing an almost certain sentence of death, I felt some sympathy for them.

This was before I had heard the indictment.

Now that I have listened to the four days' examination of the accused men, who have all pleaded guilty without reservation, I can say without hesitation, I am convinced of their guilt.

I have never heard such a tale of treachery, murders, spying, sabotage, and terror as the prisoners have told, with complete callousness and effrontery.

In my opinion, there can be no question of a "faked" trial, either with or without the connivance of the accused.

It is obvious to anybody that the prisoners, who do most of the talking, while Prosecutor Vishinsky confines himself to an occasional question, are behaving spontaneously.

No set of seventeen men could act their parts so brilliantly nor sustain their activity in this way without a slip for four long days.

They are clearly in full possession of their faculties, do not appear to be worried, and look well.

There is nothing to prevent any of them from alleging that the charges are "false."

Radek, at least, is aware of the presence of foreign journalists, at whom he is constantly glancing.

Any promise of leniency in return for a plea of guilty would scarcely be likely to influence the accused, in view of the execution of the defendants in the previous trial, at a time when most of those in the present case were still at liberty.

The trial is being held in open court, and the procedure appears to be regular.

It should be remembered that Soviet court procedure resembles that of most Continental countries in form and differs widely from that of Britain.

It is the practice of all Continental countries with which I am familiar to hold the preliminary investigation in private, and there is certainly much to be said in favor of this course.

"But really, darling, capitalism does work."

A. Ajay

In the present case, which involves official secrets and foreign diplomats, investigation *in camera* would probably be inevitable in any country.

In England, on a plea of guilty, the Court is satisfied with a short statement of facts by the prosecuting counsel.

In the Soviet Union, however, it is the practice to call witnesses and to examine the accused in elaborate detail.

This does not mean that the accused are obliged to incriminate themselves since they have first pleaded fully guilty.

The Military Collegium before which the trial is taking place, is in no sense a court-martial. It is a regular division of the Soviet High Court, created some two and a half years ago to deal with such offenses as betrayal of official secrets.

The accused are a varied lot. Most of them possess strong personalities, and it is not surprising that only three have availed themselves of the offer of defending counsel which was made to them. Among the counsel for the defense is M. Braude, one of the most eminent members of the Moscow Bar.

Piatakov is clearly the master-mind behind the gang. Even now he is fencing skillfully and not admitting a fact or revealing a name more than he is forced to do.

Radek strikes me as a poseur. Alone among the accused, he smirks and glances at the public to watch the effect of his answers.

Shestov is a pure gangster type, telling of cold-blooded murders and bank robberies with complete equanimity. Stroilov and Arnold have allowed themselves to be blackmailed by other members of the gang into committing their crimes. Stroilov is the only defendant who appears sincerely to regret his activity.

It is interesting that the average age of the accused is forty-six.

For many of the crimes they have committed—train-wrecking and firing of factories, for instance, which involve loss of life—they would, of course, be liable to the death-sentence in England.

Vishinsky is treating the accused men with remarkable restraint and courtesy. Perhaps he is over-anxious to get them to define their own crimes. He has spent some time pressing several of the defendants to admit that their activities amounted to high treason, an admission that does not seem to matter very much. Judge Ulrich scarcely intervenes at all, and the behavior of the public is exemplary.

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Pushkin: 1799-1837

Artist and innovator, political pragmatist, aristocrat, and romantic, the great Russian poet attains new stature on his 200th anniversary

By F. W. Dupee

IN the U.S.S.R., the modern, intensive study of Pushkin did not wait for an anniversary. It is as old as the Soviets themselves—in fact, much older. We know that the original Russian followers of Marx—Plekhanov, Chernishevsky, etc.—reached a high level of free cultural speculation at a time when, in most other countries, Marxism was being interpreted chiefly along political lines. From this period, accordingly, we can date the modern work of research and reappraisal of Pushkin; then, as now, the problems of the poet's life were recognized and debated. Here was a man who, after a rebellious youth, had made his peace with the czar, and even served him with his writings; yet here was a writer passionately admired by all of his successors save a few fanatics; and here was a writer whose best work (done, strangely enough, in the period of his political retreat) founded the great Russian tradition of realism in literature.

A problem for Marxist critics, a trap for the Marxist vulgarizer: such, Pushkin has been from the beginning.

And so the Pushkinite of today owes respect to those earlier Russian Marxists for their efforts to solve the apparent dilemma of the poet's life. The October Revolution, on the other hand, made two contributions of the greatest importance to the study of Pushkin. First, it opened the state archives where the poet's "police record" lay buried; and second, it raised the whole Pushkin controversy from the concern of a political party to an intellectual problem of the workers' state. The storm over Pushkin now began in earnest. At first, Mayakovsky and the Futurists were for throwing him overboard altogether, along with the whole cultural past. But this was a temporary attitude, and never, perhaps, quite serious. It soon gave way to study along genuine Marxist lines. And when Soviet scholarship entered the present period of critical assimilation and revaluation of the past, Pushkin became the spearhead of the investigations. During the past two years, according to I. D. W. Talmadge, "over a hundred titles were published in the U.S.S.R. on this subject in addition to virtually thousands of critical essays and articles." Some of the fruits of this bumper crop of studies now appear in English in Publication No. 4 of The Critics' Group.[1]

The essays here translated are four in number: from Gorky, a brief word of homage to Pushkin; from Lunacharsky, an article, "Pushkin As Critic," which turns out to be largely a discussion of certain faults in present-day Marxist criticism; from A. Zeitlin and I. Vinogradov, each a long comprehensive study of Pushkin's development, political and æsthetic. Both Zeitlin and Vinogradov cover much the same ground, and both reach much the same general conclusion—namely, that Pushkin's "retreat" was practically inevitable under the circumstances, and in the long run justified by his healthy poetic innovations. However, Vinogradov succeeds better than Zeitlin in integrating the two lines of development. Both writers, it seems to me, hammer the political determinant harder than materialist criticism needs to do, and the rather hasty-seeming translation makes them heavy reading. They represent, however, a type of approach to literature which, including as it does historical scholarship along with aesthetic insights, points to a time when our criticism, having subdued the many elements which now clash within it, shall become a rounded Marxist phenomenon—art or science, as may be.

AT ANY RATE, for an American who, like this writer, knows no Russian, these Soviet interpretations have one immediate disadvantage: they assume a knowledge of Pushkin and an enthusiasm for his work which most of us cannot, in all honesty, as yet lay claim to. Accordingly, we should perhaps first tackle Ernest J. Simmons's life of the poet,[2] a non-Marxist work of American university scholarship. Mr. Simmons tells his story in a diffuse, old-fashioned manner. He is innocent of any overt political motives, but not illiberal. Soviet criticism has influenced him. He too feels the need to justify Pushkin's turn to the right; and this he proceeds to do, though without the precision and conviction of the Marxists. Unlike the usual academic biographer-historian, Mr. Simmons has no nostalgia for the old regime. He sees clearly enough the moral ugliness of that setting, the deadly pettiness of most of its actors. He is Pushkin's ardent partisan, not because he is, in the usual way, in love with his hero; but because he too resents the things against which Pushkin had to contend. On the whole, then, certain definite virtues push their way through the shapeless, wordy flux of this long narrative. And if Mr. Simmons's work means that the taboo has at last fallen from Russian literature as a "field" for American scholars, then there is still another reason for congratulating its author.

After Simmons's biography, or perhaps before it, the American reader should look into Edmund Wilson's article on Pushkin in a recent number of the *New Republic*. Mr. Wilson does not attempt to theorize about the poet; instead, he tries to give an impression of Pushkin's literary quality, of how Pushkin's poetry would feel to us if we could read it in Russian. And he has done a convincing job.

The great distinction of Pushkin's genius in its maturity, Wilson tells us, was in "making poetry of classical firmness and precision out of a world realistically observed." In *Eugene Onegin*, his masterpiece, "he can make us see and hear things as Keats can, but his range is very much greater: he can give us the effect in a few lines of anything from the opening of a bottle of champagne or the loading and cocking of pistols for a duel, to the spinning and skipping of a ballet girl—who 'flies like fluff from Æolus's breath'—or the falling of the first flakes of snow." Here, then, was the origin of that care for physical detail, and that sharp skill in rendering it, which distinguished Gogol, Tolstoy, Chekhov, and Gorky, and which continues to distinguish the Soviet movie director of today. But the world of *Eugene Onegin* was not only "realistically observed," it was also conveyed in its own terms. Pushkin made his poetry out of the speech of the day; and this, a truly revolutionary innovation, meant the death of rhetoric in Russian verse, the beginning of a genuine national literature.

Such, in a brief and sketchy impression, is the quality of Pushkin's verse in its maturity. But, although Pushkin had the facility of a genius, he did not achieve this mature style without labor, experiment, and self-discipline. In fact, Zeitlin is able to show how the poet's professional seriousness, as against the dilletantism of the earlier courtly schools, was an important development in Russian literature; and one which corresponded to the rise of those middle classes for which, in his last period, undervalued by his own class, Pushkin largely wrote. Nor was this style achieved without continuous interference from outside. After a childhood passed in the czar's lyceum, Pushkin graduated into an atmosphere of political suspicion which kept him for the rest of his life under a relentless police regimen. Western biography depends on discoveries in libraries and old chests; the definitive life of Pushkin had to wait, as I have said, for a revolution to open the state police records.

Pushkin was born into one of those vain,

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1 PUSHKIN, *Homage by Marxist Critics. Translated from the Russian by Bernard Guilbert Guerney. Edited by Irving D. W. Talmadge. Critics Group.* 35c.

2 PUSHKIN, *by Ernest J. Simmons. Harvard University Press.* $4.

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Herb Kruckman

SEEING AMERICA FIRST

VI—Competition

quarrelsome, half-bankrupt families, which clung to the edge of the aristocracy for its livelihood. Like the families in Tolstoy's novels, they shuttled back and forth between Moscow, where they had a house, and Petersburg, where the czar's court was, and the provinces, where they owned a big, decayed, serf-worked farm. Their lives were ruled by incompetence, capriciousness, social pretensions, idleness, and bad temper. They spent their days "visiting" from house to house and intriguing for official privileges. Meanwhile, the farm ran down, and when they entertained in town, they had to borrow pots and pans from the neighbors.

Pushkin was not on good terms with his family; but, like Byron, he was proud of its aristocratic background, its "600-year-old nobility." Certainly, both men perceived the decadence and stuffiness of their class, yet both were capable of using their noble ancestry as a club to beat off middle-class vulgarity and pushiness. To complicate the matter of Pushkin's ancestry, he was descended on his mother's side from an Ethiopian. Abrahm Petrovich Hannibal, his great-grandfather, had been brought to Moscow as an exotic curiosity for the court of Peter the Great. The clever Abrahm Petrovich made his way in Russia, and his son was able to marry into the family of the semi-noble Pushkins. This Ethiopian strain in the poet, though weakened by three Russian marriages, left a decided stamp on his features. The question of whether Pushkin was much affected, either biologically or socially, by his Negro blood, is a widely debated one.

Like Byron, again, Pushkin was a poetic prodigy and suffered at no stage of his life from lack of critical recognition. As a youngster at the royal lyceum, he was praised by everybody—schoolmates, masters, and even great established men of letters—for his clever verses in the French classical tradition, "that strange, belated rococo of our genteel Russian literature," as Lunacharsky calls it. After his graduation, in what is inevitably described as his "Green Lamp Period" (from the name of a certain society to which he belonged), Pushkin became an immediate force in Russian literature, an influence on his contemporaries. The Society of the Green Lamp was nominally, and perhaps chiefly, devoted to the study and encouragement of literature. Drinking bouts, however, gave it an orgiastic character; and, more important, it was secretly linked to the Union of Welfare, a revolutionary organization composed of army officers and other high-placed liberals who were later to be known as the Decembrists. Directed at liquidating the power of the czar and establishing a constitutional regime, this curious and tragic movement also included in its program the emancipation of the serfs. So Pushkin's poetry at this time, like the Society that encouraged it, was Epicurean on the one hand, and frankly revolutionary on the other. At this time, he wrote "The Village," the "Ode to Freedom," and other political pieces, which were soon to get him in deep trouble with the government.

In 1818, the czar, who had formerly considered himself a liberal, enlightened monarch, turned suddenly reactionary, and in the general suppression and dispersal of the revolutionary group, Pushkin was exiled to the

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south of Russia. There, cut off from his intellectual Petersburg companions, he alternately courted and insulted the natives, had many love affairs, and played practical jokes of a not very good-natured character. He was, as Vinogradov says, an aristocratic rebel, for whom independence in the personal, libertarian sense, was "synonymous with motifs of liberty in a political sense." In spite of the Reaction, the military conspirators were still thick around the army posts. A southern branch of the Union of Welfare had been formed, and Pushkin was in pretty constant touch with its members. The liberals valued him for his genius, but considered him somewhat less than reliable as a man of action; so it appears that he was never asked to become a member of the Union.

But the most important event of this period was Pushkin's discovery of Byron's poetry and, with it, the whole powerful literary cult of emotion, melancholy, landscape, and local color which we call romanticism. This influence now quickly penetrated his own poetry. He wrote a series of tales of love and violence obviously inspired by Byron's Eastern narratives. But imitation of Byron soon gave way to assimilation, and, before long, Pushkin had so mastered the spirit of romanticism that he could calmly satirize its extravagances. Such a satire is *Eugene Onegin,* his masterpiece, a long novel in verse which he began in exile and which he was to work at for more than eight years. But when we say satire, we do not mean that *Onegin* is like a work by Pope or Dryden, for Pushkin was not at all that kind of satirist. True, he had mastered romanticism; that is, he had recognized and rejected such of its values as were negative. But many of its novel and good qualities—its warmth of feeling, its awareness of human depths and contradictions, its artistic habit of varying its moods—these he had digested, and these he now gave out in his masterpiece. The earlier artificial and formal classicism had turned into its opposite, romanticism, and now, in *Onegin,* as in certain French works of the time, it emerged in a higher form.

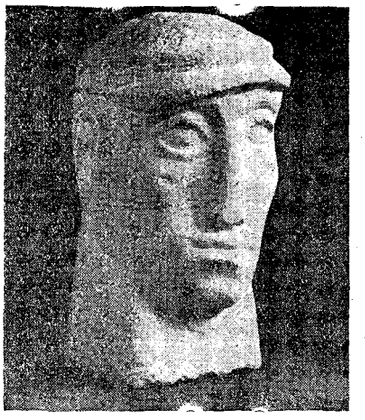
Shortly before the fatal Decembrist revolt, Pushkin was allowed to return from the south. He spent some time at the family farm, still in confinement, and narrowly escaped being in Petersburg on the tragic day, December 14, 1825, when the conspirators made their brief, abortive attempt at power. It seems to be agreed that had he been there, Pushkin would undoubtedly have been among the rebels. Most of his friends of the Green Lamp were there; and in the suppression that followed, several were shot, the rest sent to Siberia. For Pushkin, a time of great anxiety now followed, while his activities were being investigated, and his fate debated by the czar. The uncertainty of this period ended when Pushkin met the czar face to face in the Kremlin and made a kind of bargain.

The result of this interview was a nominal reconciliation, fatally vague and full of contradictions, which endured for the twelve remaining years of the poet's life. At times, Pushkin believed this peace to be real; he even wrote a few poems to celebrate it. On the other hand he remained wholly loyal, in a personal sense, to his lost companions, sending them verses and messages to Siberia at considerable risk to himself. On the whole, it seems safe to say that, like most other great artists, Pushkin was instinctively liberal; but when this liberalism expressed itself in concrete political opinions, it was often confused and contradictory. An uncertainty in the state of his beliefs was evident even before the Reaction, when his active revolutionary friends were still there to influence him. The loss of these men meant not only an end of practical political guidance for Pushkin himself, but an emphatic pause in all such activities for Russia as a whole. Pushkin now found himself stranded in the midst of a far-reaching, deep-going Reaction. He faced an autocratic social structure which seemed eternal—which, indeed, had just withstood the Decembrists as though they had been flies brushing at its walls. This revolt, in fact, had only resulted in a tightening and a hardening of the ancient structure. So it was easy enough for Pushkin to assume that historical development for Russia meant "a totality of the efforts of all classes of society," as Vinogradov says. And for himself, he could at least explore that society, learn his way around it, study the means by which it might gradually be transformed. This he did, turning more and more to the reading of history, the writing of sober, observant prose and poetry. To this period belong the prose tales, which were to influence the novelists of the next epoch—Turgenev, Dostoevsky, and the rest.

Pushkin might thus compromise, intellectually, with the regime, and even write great poetry, but externally he was involved in hopeless contradictions. In order to confirm his peace with the status quo, he married a conventional Petersburg society girl, many years younger than himself, very beautiful and quite extravagant, insensitive, and stupid. Her fondness for parties drove Pushkin deeply into debt, and at the same time sent him crawling to the czar for favors. The czar, meanwhile, had never really forgiven Pushkin, never for a day released him from the petty espionage of the secret police. He intercepted Pushkin's mail and censored his poems with his own hand. Pushkin's way out from this impossible situation was a death which was practically a suicide. His wife's indiscretions involved him in a duel, for which the czar himself appears to have had some responsibility. Mortally shot, the poet died a few days later. The czar, to whom Pushkin was no more than a versifying puppet who brought prestige to his regime, was now to find that the poet meant a great deal more than that to Russia. While the aristocracy shrugged at the whole affair, the wanton, wasteful death of Pushkin brought protests from Petersburg's new middle-class intelligentsia, its students and professors, its poor. Troops were sent to Pushkin's house to prevent a demonstration by these elements. An order went out to the press prohibiting all but formal notices of the death, and several editors who refused to obey were jailed. On the day of the funeral, not only were students forbidden to cut classes, but at the last minute, Pushkin's remains were moved from one church to another to deceive the crowds. Finally, concealed in a wooden box covered with straw and a mat, his body was taken by sleigh to his farm for burial.[3] A woman, seeing the crude coffin, asked of a peasant, "What is it?"

"*God* knows what!" the peasant answered. "You see, someone killed Pushkin—they are whisking him away in a bast mat and straw, may God forgive them, like a dog!"

[3] These details, like most of the biographical material here, are from Simmons.



Sculpture in stone by Nat Werner

Taxi Driver

★

Junior Executive

(*Automatically promoted to that rank at the advent of the N.R.A.*)

Here come the smooth boys wearing white carnations,
Tall, yes, white collars, but not very bright,
(Or if so—brains in the pocket out of sight)—
Hair-thinning college boys, or just relations.
These are the keepers of the outer law:
"Yes, Madam, the customer is always right,
And we are sorry that it happened, quite.
Service, that's what we run this business for."

Service—for you. And we? We are beginning
To fight the inner law for mild promotion,
To keep the boat of three square meals in motion
Before our hair is done completely thinning.
We are the smooth boys, and you see us doing
The act, poor bastards, we are paid for doing.

MARSHALL SCHACHT.

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Victory on the Waterfront

The strike waged by the Maritime Federation is a signpost for progressive trade unionism

By Robert Holmes

CRIES of "Take her away!" are heard again on San Francisco's Embarcadero and in other West Coast ports as cargoes move for the first time since the great maritime strike was called on the night of October 30 last. For ninety-five days, 40,000 longshore and seafaring workers had effectively tied up the shipping industry of the Pacific in order (1) to preserve the gains won in the bitter struggle of 1934, and (2) to obtain from recalcitrant shipowners certain new concessions.

As seamen trundled duffel bags aboard ship, and long-idle vessels were made ready for their voyages, as husky longshoremen were dispatched from the hiring halls to the various piers where thousands of tons of cargo were to be worked in some 250 ships which had been deserted, ghost-like hulks for three months, the formal end of the strike came with the signing of new agreements between operators and seven striking unions on February 4.

It was a great victory, this strike, almost unequaled in the history of the American labor movement. Forty thousand workers maintained solid, unbroken picket lines over a coast line of 17,000 miles which stretched from San Diego to Seattle. The pickets kept watch over empty piers and sheds through monotonous, lonesome nights during one of the coldest winters on record. There was wind, snow, and rain as the men huddled around their little fires in the wooden shacks which were their shelter during the long hours of picket duty. At times, it was difficult to keep up the spirits of the men who are used to active, busy lives. There was little activity on the picket lines, because the workers had done their job of organizing well. The shipowners did not bring in scabs because there were no scabs to be had. They were driven from the 'front in 1934, and during the following months until today, the maritime industry on the West Coast is 100-percent organized.

The strike was a signal victory from two aspects. First, it must be remembered that the shipowners' original intention was to lock out the men, and in effect conduct an employers' sit-down for three months until the public got tired and demanded that the strike be ended, thus giving the operators a basis upon which to smash the unions, destroy the Maritime Federation, and force the workers back on the owners' terms. This was completely defeated. Second, the strikers obtained about 85 percent of their new demands. Blocking the shipowners' plan to wreck the unions, thereby preserving the victory of 1934, was in itself a triumph for the men. The additional success of winning most of the new demands marks this strike as the farthest point yet reached in labor's march. The militant longshoremen and seafaring workers of the Pacific are leading the way for labor.

The Maritime Federation has been strengthened beyond destruction by this strike. The West Coast strike gave impetus to the fight being waged in the East by the insurgent seamen. Out of the battle just concluded on both coasts may come a National Maritime Federation which will be an important factor in the C.I.O. campaign which is just in its beginning. The seven striking West Coast unions send their men back to work with a new and revitalized feeling of solidarity among them. They learned patience and understanding in ninety-five days on the picket line, and they remembered the lesson of 1934: the settlement of the strike must be a joint settlement. It *was* a joint settlement. No one union could be either tricked or forced into deserting any of the other organizations on strike. The employers finally came to realize that is was useless to try to play one union against another. And the employers also learned that they could not destroy the unions even with the billion dollars the strike cost them. The shipowners have come to accept the inevitable, that the unions are here to stay and must be dealt with on an honorable and fair basis. It must not be expected that the operators will cease their efforts to undermine the unions, for they will not. Even now, provocateurs and stool-pigeons are at work. But the owners knew that they were licked. Public support had not turned against the workers. The employers' sit-down failed. Victory for the maritime unions resulted.

Turning to the gains won by the men in this strike, longshore leader Harry Bridges pointed out that had the operators made these same offers on October 30, the strike would not have happened. But it took three months of idle ships and cut-off revenue to convince the diehards among the employers that it would have been wiser and cheaper to have made these offers in the beginning. Some of the operators were willing to settle from the start, but they were blocked by the Big-Four western off-shore operators: Dollar, Matson, American-Hawaiian, and Swayne & Hoyt. Even these companies finally learned their lesson, however. It will be a long day before they are ready to tackle the waterfront workers again.

Arthur Getz

Briefly, what has each of the seven unions won?

Longshoremen. Retention of the hiring hall, with rotation of jobs and equal division of work and earning among their coast membership of 18,000. Retention of the six-hour day and thirty-hour week, all other time being overtime. The longshoremen fought for the six-hour day, not for themselves alone, but, as Bridges put it, "because we owe it to the labor movement as a whole." The longshoremen also won preference of employment, which they did not have before. At the present time, this is of small practical effect, because the I.L.A. completely controls all longshore work. However, it is a safeguard for the future and a protection to weaker, smaller locals. Also incorporated in the new agreement are provisions clarifying working conditions with such sections as these: "If it is a question of convenience vs. safety— 'Safety First!' If it is tonnage vs. safety, then again— 'Safety First!'"

Sailors. Express recognition in the agreement of the union-controlled shipping hall which the men have had in fact during the past two years. The recognition of the hall gives the union a stronger hold on the dispatching of men, and is a safeguard against the blacklist which the operators had raised to a fine art before 1934. The sailors won cash wages for overtime instead of time off, which generally was given in distant ports where it meant nothing to the men. A wage increase of $10 per month, or 14-percent raise, was also gained.

Marine Firemen. They have won recognition of the shipping hall, cash wages for overtime, 14-percent wage increase, and improved working conditions.

Marine Cooks & Stewards. They have obtained recognition of the union-controlled shipping hall, 14-percent wage increase, better living quarters and working conditions, and an eight-hour day within a spread of twelve hours on coastwise vessels. This union did not win the eight-hour day on deep-sea vessels. There they had to be content with a nine-

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hour day in a thirteen-hour spread. This was one of the only two fundamental demands which a striking union did not win. The other will be noted further on.

Masters, Mates, & Pilots. They won a 14-percent wage increase, cash wages for overtime, extra pay for work heretofore not paid for, and improved conditions. The union did not win preference of employment for its members, the second exception of a fundamental demand not secured. However, since about 90 percent of the licensed deck officers are members of this organization, and since a strong proviso against discrimination for union activities was included in the agreement, the loss of preference at this time is minimized. Furthermore, the unlicensed personnel of the ships, joined with the Masters, Mates, & Pilots in the Maritime Federation, will protect the latter group against discrimination.

Marine Engineers. They won a 14-percent wage increase, cash wages for overtime, increased manning scales, and improved conditions. They did not secure preference, but here again the same situation exists as with the Masters, Mates, & Pilots described above.

Radio Telegraphists. They won a union-controlled hiring hall, preference of employment, 14-percent wage increase, and duties confined to radio work, whereas formerly they were required to perform "paper" work in connection with cargo in addition to their radio duties. They also secured improved living quarters and working conditions.

A SUBJECT of great importance and interest is a comparison of this strike with that of 1934. In many ways, differences are to be noted, and they are all differences which result to the credit of and emphasize the strength of the unions. The 1934 strike was an organizing strike such as the nation is now witnessing in the auto industry. In 1934, men were still coming off the ships sixty and seventy days after the strike was declared, a strike which lasted eighty-three days. In the strike just over, every one of the 40,000 men who work in the shipping industry walked off the job the day the strike call went out. The organizing job of 1934 had been thoroughly done. The 1936 strike saw every port of the West Coast completely in the hands of the workers. It was a tremendous display of workers' power, and showed what militant, rank-and-file unions, which had completely unionized an industry, could do.

Second, there was no appreciable violence in this strike, a fact which irrefutably answers those persons who say that labor advocates violence. What violence there was in this strike was perpetrated by employers' thugs in San Francisco. Lee J. Holman had recruited a crew of 200 strong-arm men who would descend in the dark of night on a lone picket who might have strayed away from the picket group and "work him over." During the latter days of the strike, Holman's gang smashed the windows of the press where the *Voice of the Federation,* maritime workers' weekly, was printed. Finally, a resolution was passed at the San Francisco Labor Council condemning vigilanteism and calling upon the mayor and police to blot it out. As a result of this pressure, the police raided Holman's headquarters, arrested some thirty-six thugs, and confiscated numerous lead pipes, blackjacks, and sundry other weapons. Even though these men were subsequently released despite their illegal possession of weapons and proved violence, the mere fact that police arrested them was in sharp contrast to 1934, when only strikers were arrested—on charges of vagrancy when there was no evidence of such offense. But the maritime workers have come a long way in a few months. They are a powerful force in the labor movement and an influential organization in the community. The esteem in which the public holds the maritime unions has prevented unlawful arrests of their members, and deterred the shipowners from resorting to violence to break the strike.

Lithograph by Beatrice Mandelman

More than this, the shipowners could not break the strike because no strikebreakers were available. There were no licensed men to take the ships out, nor were there unlicensed men to man the ships, nor longshoremen to work cargo. This is skilled work, and the shipowners did not dare to run their ships with untrained men.

Next, the unions were efficiently organized for the purpose of conducting the strike. There was a Joint Coast Policy Committee composed of representatives from all the unions who laid out strategy and conducted negotiations. This committee was wisely and courageously headed by Harry Bridges, who steadily grows in stature in the American labor movement, a man who is destined to take his place with Bill Haywood and Gene Debs and those other selfless, militant leaders who saw hope for a better world in the working class. Bridges, during this strike as in 1934, was incorruptible, honest, shrewd. Time and again he turned an apparent defeat into a strategic retreat from which he returned to a smashing victory. The shipowners hate Harry Bridges, and they hate him because they cannot buy him and they cannot lick him. Only the fact that his tireless activities have made him sick and forced him into a hospital for treatment and rest, sounds a disturbing note.

A Joint Publicity Committee educated the public to what the unions were fighting to win. They had public support which they lacked in 1934. A Joint Relief Committee conducted the food kitchens where thousands of workers were fed. Strikers' families were taken care of. Thousands of dollars were donated to the maritime workers by other unions who knew that if the strike was lost, their position was weakened. Now that the strike is over, these other unions can call upon the maritime workers for "sympathy, support, and money," to employ Bridges's words, and they will get it. Even now the longshoremen are helping the teamsters organize in San Pedro.

The strike was conducted by the rank and file. Every major issue was submitted to the men for a referendum vote. Each important decision was that of the membership. Democracy among these unions is an actuality. The workers knew what they wanted, and they got it. And now they intend to help other unions. They are going to organize the unorganized as they have been doing during the past two and a half years. They are going to extend trade-union democracy into the labor movement as a whole. Already their influence has been felt in the San Francisco Labor Council. The new president is a progressive who won with the waterfront workers' support, and four members of the executive committee are maritime leaders, one of them Harry Bridges.

It is difficult to foretell events on the waterfront. Bridges says: "The workers are desirous of maintaining peace, but we can't close our eyes to the fact that the shipowners may in the future try to take away the gains we have won. That they will never do." This much can be said, the maritime workers in this strike *consolidated* the gains that were recognized in the agreements of 1934 and which were won by job action during 1935 and 1936. The gains obtained will not be surrendered. The workers should continue to secure improved conditions from year to year. Their strong, democratic organizations are the best insurance of this fact.

In other fields, the maritime workers will go forward. They intend to join the forces which are building for a Farmer-Labor Party in 1940. Harry Bridges has described their plans: "The unions must battle for democracy. We'll help those who helped us by carrying on the fight along political lines. We'll fight for liberal and labor legislation, for social security, and for the unemployed. We will fight to maintain the American standard of living. We will oppose fascism. In Germany there is no democracy because there are no trade unions. Strong, powerful, and militant unions are the bulwark of democracy. We are going to carry on the fight, not only for those who helped us during this strike, but for everyone."

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Roundabout Roads to Trotskyism

The sincerity with which a view is held does not validate it, a fact which is of special importance just at present

An Editorial

AFTER months of sharp controversy, it has become evident that the defense of Leon Trotsky has taken the form of a division of labor among his defenders. One theme has emerged with three chief variations. It is important to distinguish between the various arguments proferred in Trotsky's behalf; it is equally important to discern the essential agreement of all the various lines of approach in terms of their political implications.

1. Trotsky and his special pleaders subordinate their attacks upon the validity of the Moscow trials to their general offensive, of long standing, against the whole Soviet leadership and policies. According to the familiar Trotskyist formula, the trials were "frame-ups" of "old Bolsheviks" perpetrated by Stalin as the head of a "totalitarian" state or a "madhouse" (both from Trotsky's speech at the New York Hippodrome).

2. Some dissociate themselves from, or even deprecate, Trotsky's general line, while they profess to find the charges against Trotsky "fantastic," "incredible," or "inconceivable." This outlook is especially characteristic of the Socialist members associated in Trotsky's "defense" committee.

3. Some liberals have tried to dissociate themselves both from Trotsky's general line and from his personal defense, while they argue in favor of an "impartial commission of inquiry."

Each or all of these positions may be held with various degrees of sincerity; in any case, the sincerity with which an idea is held does not validate it. Neither are these positions so neatly boxed off that one person may not hold all three, shuttling on demand from one to the other, although it is true that Norman Thomas, for example, identifies himself with the second, and some liberals with the third. Our purpose is to indicate the full political implications of these three lines of approach to the Moscow trials in order to find where they converge.

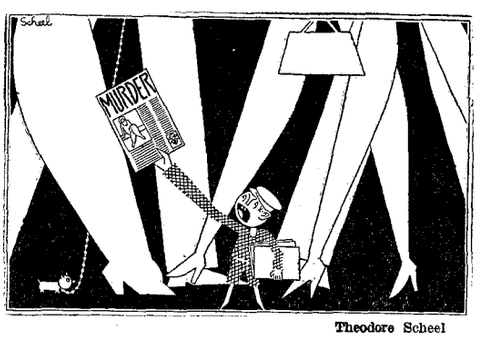
Those who defend Trotsky personally, but carefully dissociate themselves from him politically, are guilty of a flagrant, untenable dichotomy. Trotsky the man cannot be severed from Trotskyism, the system of ideas and actions. The NEW MASSES has maintained that the crimes of the Trotskyists in the Moscow trials were not acts of sudden, isolated aberration; they were, on the contrary, the fruit of long years of stubborn opposition to the policies and leadership which have made the Soviet Union great. For example, we have reminded those who found it "incredible" that Trotsky should seek to restore capitalism in the U. S. S. R., that Trotsky never thought it possible to build socialism there anyway, failing revolutions in the most important countries of Europe. Incidentally, these same incredulous individuals never seem to consider the perpetration of "the greatest frame-up in history" by the genuine old Bolsheviks at the head of the Soviet state similarly "incredible."

This artificial separation between Trotsky and Trotskyism is responsible for the second position enumerated. Those who make this separation permit the Trotskyists to start where they leave off. For the Trotskyists draw political conclusions, even if others don't. The Trotskyists talk, write, and broadcast about "degeneration" in the Soviet Union, "madhouse," "totalitarian state," etc. They do this by posing the question: if Trotsky could not be guilty of such monstrous crimes, the Soviet leadership is guilty of monstrous crimes for "persecuting" him! The Norman Thomases cannot disavow responsibility for the conclusion when they agree to the premise.

Analysis shows the same to be true of position No. 3.

The Trotskyists, original inspirers of the campaign for an "impartial commission of inquiry," have tried to present the issue thus: are you for or against an impartial inquiry? Now, nobody is against an impartial inquiry. A partial trial is no trial at all. As raised by the Trotskyists, the issue is a false one because it has only one possible side.

The true issue is: what agency is competent to hold an impartial inquiry and mete out justice? If the Soviet courts are truly the courts of a workers' state, then they are pre-eminently competent to hold such an inquiry. Now, two warrants for the arrest of Leon Trotsky have been issued by Soviet courts after extended trials of Trotsky's confessed accomplices. Two trials have already been held. There is no justification for an inquiry outside the Soviet courts unless the Soviet courts have been partner to a "frame-up," as charged by the Trotskyists. It is significant that the committee most interested in this "impartial investigation" is called "The American Committee *for the Defense* of Leon Trotsky."



Theodore Scheel

In the final analysis, the true issue is: are the Soviet courts competent to hold an impartial inquiry? Are the courts of the only workers' Power to be impugned in favor of a trial in a capitalist court? (Trotsky has declared his desire to take his case into capitalist courts by suing Communist papers.) Those who answer no to the first question and yes to the second demand an "independent" investigation. But the political implications of this demand must not be slighted; they are just what the Trotskyists need for their whole campaign against the U. S. S. R. Trotsky indicts the whole socialist system and leadership in the Soviet Union. Liberals who become partner to his attack against the Soviet judiciary cannot disclaim responsibility for their share of the blame in the whole campaign, waged by Trotsky in the capitalist press and eagerly sought by that press, of slander against the U. S. S. R.

A subsidiary question is: are any agencies, other than the Soviet courts, competent to hold an impartial inquiry? It is significant that the Trotskyists have carefully avoided naming names. If we think of Socialists, is Norman Thomas to be a member of the commission? But Thomas has long been on record with prejudgments against the Soviet leadership and the Soviet system. If we name liberals, are those on the Trotsky "defense" committee competent to pass judgment? But they have already passed judgment by impugning the good faith of the Soviet court in an inquiry which comes clearly within its jurisdiction. Are capitalist lawyers to pass judgment? Is the capitalist press to pass judgment?

This whole campaign for an "impartial inquiry" outside the Soviet courts masquerades under liberal phraseology, but it has nothing in common with true liberalism, whose interests lie in defending, not impugning, the Soviet Union. The Trotskyists have nursed the campaign along because they will draw the political implications, knifing the Soviet Union, which some liberals refuse to draw under cover of abstract principles of justice. Again we repeat that the sincerity with which some liberals may hold this demand does not justify it. Liberalism negates itself when it becomes the unwitting ally of those forces which would weaken the authority and prestige of the only workers' state in a world shadowed by war, fascism, and Reaction.

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The Supreme Court Conflict

THE hysteria over President Roosevelt's plan to outsmart the crafty Supreme Court, uncovers a strange and contorted idea of what constitutes political democracy. There are in Washington three branches of government. There is a Congress of 531 men and women, all elected by the vote of the people, 471 of them as recently as three months ago. Ostensibly this is the body that represents the political sentiment of the United States at the present time. Then there is a president, to carry out and administer the laws passed by the people's representatives. He, too, was chosen three months ago, and by a more overwhelming vote than any president had received since Monroe swept the country in 1820. And finally, there are nine men in the Supreme Court, men who were never elected, who are responsible to no one at all, who are secure in their positions for the rest of their lives, and who were handed those positions by presidents dating as far back as Taft.

Much has happened in the years since these men came to the Supreme Court. The world is a vastly different place from what it was in the war days of Wilson. And the presidents who followed him, representing the extreme of social reaction, have been thoroughly repudiated by the electorate. Yet the men those presidents placed on the country's highest bench remain, and they remain not as a detached group of beings devoted to preventing miscarriages of the expressed will of the people, but rather as a body of men with fixed social creeds, who systematically frustrate the will of the people through their interpretations of a complex document drawn up 148 years ago. These judges are constantly engaged in the business of making and remaking the Constitution, and they are not always gentle in their treatment of that sainted document. In the most literal sense, the Supreme Court has made itself, without the least authorization, a third house of the legislature, vastly more powerful than the other two because its decisions admit of no appeal.

Yet hypocrites bawl from every platform in the land, from the front pages of the press, over elaborate radio networks, that if the Court is "subordinated" to Congress or the executive, democracy will die. And democracy will live, presumably, only as long as the people's representatives are wholly under the thumb of this archaic and usurping oligarchy. What shameless pretense!

The one validly democratic criticism of the Roosevelt proposal is that it is faint-hearted, that it fails utterly to put the Court in its place. It attempts, wholly and solely, to secure an oligarchy of a more liberal brand, one more in accord with the present temper of the nation. Progressives can afford to support the President in this only so long as they bear in mind the greater struggle that is involved. Packing the Court is no solution. It does not subordinate the Court to the popular will. That can be done only by stripping the Court completely of its veto power over acts of Congress.

Youth on the March

MORE than 2000 young Americans will assemble in Washington this weekend to dramatize their plea for passage of the American Youth Act. Coming from every state and every segment of the youth population, the "pilgrims" express two momentous tendencies in American life. The first is growing, irresistible pressure for fulfillment of the November election mandate. Accompanying this movement is an inescapable swing toward independent political action which is implicit in this journey to the nation's capital under the auspices of the American Youth Congress.

That the Youth Act, embodying a sweeping program of aid to millions of young people in need, is entirely in harmony with the election pledges of Mr. Roosevelt, must be plain by now. The measure, introduced last week by Senator Lundeen and Congressmen Maverick and Voorhis, has been redrafted with the coöperation of experts in every field. No one can challenge its "practicality." The real issue is the willingness of President Roosevelt and the Democratic Party to buck those interests which must pay the cost of a decent relief program for the nation's youth. In the past, politicians have never hesitated to pay lip-service to the "youth problem." Whether they will be compelled to carry that lip-service into the realm of action, will depend in large measure upon the strength of the movement behind the bill. In that sense, the pilgrimage is essentially a show of power; the membership of the participating organizations totals nearly two million.

The problem of the immediate future is the absence of any national political medium through which the aspirations of the American Youth Congress can be expressed. Undoubtedly, the preponderance of those who go to Washington are identified with the two old parties, whether directly or through traditional allegiance. In Washington they will discover that old-party lines cross in bewildering fashion on an issue so deep-seated and critical. Certainly the heaviest artillery against a meaningful youth aid program comes from those interests still centered around the Republican Party. No better illustration, however, of Roosevelt's timid and self-defeating "middle-of-the-road" policy can be found than his stand on the youth problem. But the deception and retreat which have prevailed thus far cannot be indefinitely prolonged. In this setting a new, independent party could make enormous inroads, as the very rise of an American youth movement testifies. It is the logical conclusion to which Americans are being driven by every successive betrayal of their trust.

The significance of the youth pilgrimage thus assumes greater proportions than the current congressional battle over the youth act. The fate of the act during this session is unpredictable. The Youth Congress has inspired more sweeping support for it than at any other time in the bill's history. What is plain is the consciousness and direction which young people are finding in this quest for a fighting legislative program. The consequences of their awareness must ultimately be written in the political arena.

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READERS' FORUM

A letter to Norman Thomas from a youth leader, resigning from the Socialist Party

[In publishing this letter from a youth leader, we do so with his permission, and because we believe it to be significant of a current movement in the Socialist Party. We do not necessarily agree with certain statements concerning the Communist Party. The writer was editor of the undergraduate newspaper at the University of Cincinnati last year, was associate editor of the *Student Outlook* (publication of the Student League for Industrial Democracy) and a member of the National Executive Committee of that organization. He is at present associate editor of the *Student Advocate* (publication of the American Student Union), a member of the National Executive Committee of that body, and its Ohio organizer stationed at Cleveland.—THE EDITORS.]

● MY DEAR COMRADE THOMAS: Unknown to you, perhaps, but one of the most important events in my life, was an interview I had with you in the Sinton Hotel at Cincinnati when a freshman in college. What was important in that interview was not so much what you said for publication nor the questions I asked of you, but the questions you put to me. Out of that meeting grew my interest in the League for Industrial Democracy, my activities in the student movement, and ultimately my signing a membership card in the Socialist Party.

Therefore, what I write in this letter I do with personal regret. But my personal feelings are unimportant, except as they revolve around particular social conditions and an attitude towards them which is both unrealistic and dangerous. I shall not labor you with unnecessary language; let me, therefore, come directly to the point.

Two years after joining the Socialist Party I find myself wondering what its *raison d'être* is today? Is it merely to serve as organized opposition to the Communists? How long will it be possible for the Socialist Party to exist without a program and without any understanding of the flexible tactics necessary to the establishment of a socialist society? I fear not much longer.

When I signed a membership card, I did so because I believed the Socialist Party platform, of all party platforms, was the best. I recognized its inadequacies as we all did. I objected to certain of its reformist tendencies. I felt that our attitude towards the Communists was objectionable, despite the incorrectness of their program.

But the lessons from Germany always terrified me. They taught me that the left-wing parties in America must be unified in their opposition to the capitalists. Two years ago, we felt that the Communists were "too Red." Our view was that joining with them would alienate our liberals and progressive friends.

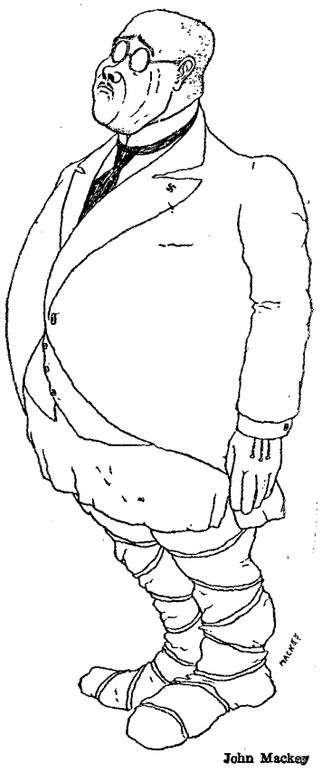
Despite this view, the European tragedies burned too deeply. In the student field, we came to realize that the price of disunity was high, whatever might be the lesser difference amongst the left-wing parties. Acting on that belief, I fought, as a member of the National Executive Committee of the Student L.I.D., for unity. Our membership forced those other members of the N.E.C. to join with the National Student League. From the dissolution of the S.L.I.D. and the N.S.L. there grew up the American Student Union. Almost simultaneously, there grew up the united Workers' Alliance of America. These were two progressive steps. American radicals moved forward!

At the same time an epoch-making event was taking place, the Seventh World Congress of the Communist International. It was pleasant to witness the alteration in Communist tactics. After analyzing social conditions, the Communists changed from what many regarded as distasteful, disruptive, and general obstreperousness in their program. Despite the difficulties of sectarianism, the Communists have made an honest effort and to a large measure have been successful. I believe this was a wholesome change.

But I can well recall the reaction of certain comrades as they read the daily reports of the Seventh Congress. "We can't trust the Communists. They'll have to prove they are not up to their old tricks." I recall that you wrote and uttered similar words. For two years the Communists have proved their good faith. I wish that I could say as much for my own colleagues.

Something else took place. Our comrades suddenly came to realize that they were philosophically unconscious. In such a state of anæsthesia, we admitted into our company that group who followed the tenets of Leon Trotsky. Just as Trotsky founded a movement built upon personal animus rather than social reality, so most of these original Trotskyites cloaked their personal experience with a social philosophy. Into the S.P. and Yipsels ("Trotskips" would be a better name) came these elements—the driftwood, the cast-offs, the putrescent odor of the radical movement, madly and wildly shouting slogans and doing little else.

You know as well as I the increasing predominance of the Trotskyist influence in our actions. Under the name of the Socialist Party, *Labor Action* published a cartoon prominently on its first page picturing "Stalinism" and "Reaction," two dogs! Is that the Socialist viewpoint? For six months what was the attitude of the *Call* on Spain? Where was the *Call* during this time? Why does the *Call* continue to devote column inch after inch to attacks on the comrades in the radical movement? Who is the enemy: the Communists or the capitalists? In Cleveland, a Trotskyist, disguised as a Socialist, wrote a blistering attack on the people's government of Spain —in the capitalist press. He was not disciplined. In the *Flame,* a publication of the Yipsels at Akron, there appeared a cartoon showing the hand of the Popular Front in Spain stabbing the Spanish workers in the back. Could Hearst have done worse?



John Mackey

100-percent Aryan

I could go on listing incidents of their action. But what is the use? You were on a platform when Max Eastman called for revolution against the Soviet Union. Have the Socialists attacked this treachery except in a brief *Call* editorial? He urged revolution against the Soviet government, Comrade Thomas. Do we still speak about "defense of the Soviet Union" or does our silence give consent to this traitor's attitude?

Now our comrades are repeating the canned phrases. Suddenly there has come into being a "real" basis for opposing the Communists! I can well remember when you once warned me of "romantic notions about revolution" before the right-wing split in our party. Today we find the Trotskyist element growing increasingly dominant in the party. Today we find them driving the real Socialists outside the fold. Today we find the party a disruptive, unrealistic, redder-than-the-rose sect, insulting those who should be our friends and generally entering upon a program of self-strangulation. We keep moving backward. Our prestige is waning. We have little influence. Yet you remain silent as these weeds grow within our field. Why?

The Socialist Party, as such, is not important. But the ideals to which we have dedicated our lives are. That the present "program" has driven many persons from the party is self-evident. I could begin to list the names of our best people, but the election figures tell the story more forcefully. The mealy-mouthed explanations of the party's 75 percent election loss have been sickening. Our isolation from organized labor and its leaders makes one wonder with whose aid we will pull this "revolution"?

Frankly, I feel that those who want unity of all progressive elements in American society are wasting their time and dissipating their energies by trying argumentatively to convince the "new" Socialist Party. There is one acid test: What are the effects upon the large mass of working people? That they are rejecting the S.P. in larger proportions needs no further proof.

These being the conditions, it is no longer possible to be a Socialist and affiliated with the Socialist Party. I, therefore, write you (as I have written to Alvaine Hollister) this letter of severance. If I felt that it was still worthwhile, I would stay in and fight against the parasites within the party. But it is more important to fight against the more important enemies of the working class. The Trotskyists can be counted upon to liquidate themselves—and the party.

I cannot write such a letter with a light heart. Yet I know that I bespeak the opinions of many another student, who once idealized you, personally, and the Socialist Party as representative of an ideal. Today is it no longer possible to conceal our disappointment and disgust. That the fault belongs to all of us I readily concede.

But I feel that a loyalty to the scientific analysis of today's social circumstances and a loyalty to the socialist ideal loom larger than allegiance to the present Socialist Party. The American Student Union, the Workers' Alliance, and the other united, constructive efforts in the radical movement must, and will, go forward despite obstructions and disrupters. The next step is to work in the building of a political party of farmers and laborers, along the lines that we desire, in order to stem the fascist reaction and to lead to the formation of a socialist society. That is the job for today. It is with the forces who see these needs that I shall devote my energies in the future. ROBERT G. SPIVACK.

P. S. I am sending copies of this letter to several friends and to the left-wing press, including the *Call.*

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REVIEW AND COMMENT

The poetic technique of W. H. Auden—Small stockholders and unemployment—America in prints

ON THIS ISLAND, like other books by W. H. Auden, is bound to seem difficult to one who has lived in America all his life and never set foot off his native continent. For that matter, even persons inured by long residence in Oxford have been heard to declare that they would sooner spend the rest of their days among the melons of Persia than be confronted by a portent like this fellow, whose presence they cannot abide. Auden does mystify and frighten; he likes to: his work's exciting character, which critics have sufficiently noticed, derives partly from his admitted fondness for playing bogy-man games. If he is not, at thirty, a strict and adult writer, he has arrived at a position which forbids patronizing remarks about his promise and probabilities. Any literary act, whereby he indicates the progress of his career, commands our almost microscopic interest.*

As we read *On This Island,* the focus of the attention is insularity, in several aspects. More than a reference to English geography and politics is meant by Auden's title; he is also touching upon the more basic solitudes of personality. Does the sense of solidarity, however active its force, ever entirely preclude the sense of isolation? In Auden's present collection, the personal poetry is more important than the political, the difference being a matter of quality rather than quantity. The best lyrics are less susceptible of fault, and better wrought, than the best satires. The best poem in the book, "Fish in the Unruffled Lakes," is a lyric; in the second best, "Casino," two voices, the lyrical and satiric, excellently blend. Auden continues to submit his adroit and accurate reports of case histories, analysis of the pathology of the British upper class, as in the catalogue of poem XIV, or this summary—

> Unable to endure ourselves, we sought relief
> In the insouciance of the soldier, the heroic sexual pose
> Playing at fathers to amuse the little ladies,
>
> Call us not tragic: falseness made farcical our death;
> Nor brave; ours was the will of the insane to suffer
> By which since we could not live we gladly die:
> And now we have gone for ever to our foolish graves.

But a minor plangency of tone here and there, an occasional whiff of nostalgia, takes the edge, sometimes, off the zest and bite.

The more a poet consents to publication, the more he is liable to become indulgent toward his lesser vices. The unassimilated literary influence is more apparent in this book than in the days when Auden was backing into literature, as they said, from his study of mathematics, engineering, aeronautics, or what not. There is evidence that he has been paying attention to contemporaries as well as to his earlier spiritual ancestors.

> And the nightingale is dumb,
> And the angel will not come

certainly suggests Housman, as the following certainly suggests Yeats:

> We till shadowed days are done,
> We must weep and sing
> Duty's conscious wrong,
> The devil in the clock,
> The Goodness carefully worn
> For atonement or for luck;
> We must lose our loves,
> On each beast and bird that moves
> Turn an envious look.

The difficulties and obscurities that beset Auden's work and interfere with it, emerge, like groundhogs into sunlight, more clearly when he is writing unblessed by the shadow of Isherwood, his occasional collaborator. Auden should come to understand that some of his troubles (or our troubles with him) derive from careless attention to matters of grammar and syntax, and not only from a deliberate cultivation of the seven types of ambiguity catalogued by Mr. Empson. For instance, in

> As through a child's rash happy cries
> The drowned voice of his parents rise
> In unlamenting song—

rise should undoubtedly be a singular verb, whose subject is *voice,* and not be attracted into the plural by its nearness to *parents;* nor is the requirement of the rhyme so inexorable that the difficulty might not be resolved. Likewise, in

> Dare-devil mystic who bears the scars
> Of many spiritual wars
> And smoothly tell
> The starving that their one starvation [sic—salvation,]
> Is personal regeneration [etc.],

it is careless work to hook up by the coördinating conjunction *and* the verbs *bears* (in the third person because it is not yet apparent that *mystic* is a vocative) and *tell,* which is definitely second person. If this sounds like captious pedagogical niggling, consider

> Far-sighted as falcons, they looked down another future;
> For the seed in their loins were hostile, though afraid of their pride,
> And, tall with a shadow now, inertly wait.

(The reader who wants to be perfectly fair should consult the eight preceding stanzas of the *Prologue.*) This poses several questions: Is *for* conjunction or preposition? Is *seed* object of *for,* or subject of *were?* If the latter, why not *was?* Do the two *theirs* in the second line have the same antecedent, or is the second supposed to refer to *seed?* If neither *seed,* nor, of course, *loins* is the subject of *were,* what is,—*they,* understood? What does *and* connect? (To say nothing of the abrupt succession and incongruity of the metaphors.)

"Improve my mind! Young man, I'm the boss here!"

On the other hand, there is an entirely legitimate use of ambiguity, which is well illustrated (never ruling out entirely the possibility of a misprint) by the following:

> May with its light behaving
> Stirs vessel, eye, and limb;
> The singular and sad
> Are willing to recover,
> And to the swan-delighting river
> The careless picnics come,
> The living white and red.

Here, by writing *behaving* for *behavior,* Auden has given up an assonance, and sacrificed explicitness of meaning; on the other hand he has gained by permitting the hint of the assonance, and by the several possible meanings that can now be read into the line, or at least present themselves as nuances of the thought: the ambiguity as to whether *behaving* is noun or adjective, and, if the latter, whether it modifies *May* or *light;* the ambiguity as to whether *light* is adjective modifying *behaving,* or noun modified by *behaving,* or unmodified noun. The fact that we finally decide on one or the other intellectual solution does not rule out as discordant the various other poetic impressions.

Another injunction which the remarkable technical virtuosity of a writer like Auden imposes on its possessor is that of curbing extravagance. One as tough as Auden would be bound, sooner or later, to tackle the sestina: it is good practice, but there could be no more hideous circle of a poet's hell than that occupied by organized throngs of sestina-fanciers.

* *On This Island,* by W. H. Auden. Random House. $1.50.

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Auden sometimes performs useless prodigies by way of demonstrating how utterly he can let himself yield to the exigencies of form without entirely succumbing. For instance:

That night when joy began
Our narrowest veins to flush
We waited for the flash
Of morning's levelled gun.

But morning let us pass
And day by day relief
Outgrew his nervous laugh;
Grows credulous of peace

As mile by mile is seen
No trespasser's reproach.

Here you see what, with his trick rhyme scheme, and manipulated imagery, he lets himself in for, a pancake landing he often achieves to the cheers of the populace:

Whatever poacher preach,
No fields but his are sown.

That is just about what we have a right to expect, and many could be found to express admiration. But is that what Auden does? See how beautifully he comes out of it and zooms away, the dramatic effect being heightened by the anticipation of danger, and the effect and brightness of the poem established by breaking the form's tension. This is the way he works it out:

As mile by mile is seen
No trespasser's reproach
And love's best glasses reach
No fields but are his own.

Just a little bit like stunting, but what a pretty piece of work!

Auden writes well: he has a good ear, a vigorous respect for the sound of written speech, a firm and supple precision. His manipulation of it is a dynamic factor in the progress of the English language. In their own metaphorical lingo, the Pylon School (as Auden's group might be called) is wont to define its position as, if not insular, at least marginal, or—a favorite word—terminal. If we cannot be positive that here is the station where all the romantics, and almost all the fellow-travelers, get off, we are justified in supposing, from the fact that so many tracks seem to converge here, that we are coming somewhere near the end of the line. It would be too bad if a fellow like Auden permitted himself to assume the merely static quality of pylon or marker, around which the future English, forever unable to outgrow the sports and games, the public testimonials in favor of love (in short, the age of thirty), would wheel, hover, and dip their wings in ecstasies of circular adoration. It would be a shame if the new world, apprehended by the creative sensitivity of the poet, should remain fixed like a mirage in the imagination.

And now no path on which we move
But shows already traces of
  Intentions not our own,
Thoroughly able to achieve
What our excitement could conceive,
  But our hands left alone.

ROLFE HUMPHRIES.

Win the Small Stockholder!

ARE YOU A STOCKHOLDER?, *by Alden Winthrop. Covici, Friede.* $2.50.

HOW corporation balance sheets are juggled by the officials and their docile auditors is the central theme of *Are You A Stockholder?* Alden Winthrop has pulled together a lot of concrete examples which he analyzes in non-technical language. He also shows that even Hoover thought it politically wise to placate the small investor with congressional investigations. Out of the stock exchange investigation ordered under Hoover, and guided aggressively by Ferdinand Pecora, came proposals for regulation which could not be ignored by President Roosevelt.

With the help of quotations from John T. Flynn, a tireless critic of Wall Street, who worked with Pecora on the investigation, Mr. Winthrop shows what the Securities Act of 1933 and the Securities Exchange Act of 1934 have and have not accomplished. In the first place, he indicates that before the bills were passed, Wall Street influence was at work from inside. Administration men drew the teeth from these measures. Then he reminds us that the first chairman of the Securities and Exchange Commission, Joseph B. Kennedy, had been active in Wall Street, participating in insiders' stock pools during the pre-crisis years. Since Mr. Winthrop's book was printed, Kennedy's successor, James Landis, has moved up to be dean of Harvard Law School. Of Landis, Flynn said recently (*New Republic,* January 27): "He was 'fair' and 'constructive' and 'sound' according to Wall Street standards. Mr. Landis turned out to be a gentleman who would not hurt a flea, particularly a flea wearing spats and carrying a cane and belonging to the right set."

But apart from weaknesses in administration, these new measures are of limited usefulness. Between them, they provide that full information must be published about every *new* security issue publicly offered. And full current reports must be filed with the S.E.C. by every corporation listed on a stock exchange. But the form of the annual reports distributed to stockholders and released to the press is not affected. Explanations of phoney "reserves" and deliberately misplaced "losses" or padded profits are now available for listed corporations to those who know how to get at the—theoretically public—reports filed with the S.E.C. But these laws do not require standardized accounting practice for published reports, or honest translation of detailed facts into simple terms for all stockholders and possible investors. Mr. Winthrop warns that we must not be so thrilled by the newly published facts about salaries, bonuses, and stock options taken by coropration executives that we imagine we now have full light on the inner workings of the great aggregations of capital which they manage.

Politically, the subject is important not only for the small investor whose troubles stir Mr. Winthrop's wrath, but for all who look eagerly toward the end of the capitalist system. For the increasing cleavage of interest between finance capital on the one hand and the petty capitalist and small investor on the other hand, has already developed among these a fitful hostility to the financial rulers. Al-

Homework

Etching by Judith Gutman Quat

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ready thousands of their middle-class victims offer the psychological basis for fascist demagogy. A deeper understanding is urgently needed, so that we can win these disillusioned small investors for the fight against the capitalist system as such. Here the Flynns and the Winthrops fail us politically. They provide valuable ammunition, but they do not turn their attack against the capitalist relationship, which is the real enemy.

ANNA ROCHESTER.

Specimen Cabinet

UNEMPLOYMENT RELIEF IN PERIODS OF DEPRESSION, *by Leah H. Feder. Russell Sage Foundation.* $2.50.

MY first introduction to scientific method was a view of neat rows of bees, impaled in hundreds of drawers and cabinets and labeled with genus, species, sub-species. Those unhoneyed, buzzless hives in a college museum, and the enormous erudition to which they bore testimony, grew into a symbol. There was the finished, static world. The origin and cause of bees, however, their results, interrelations, uses, potentialities—none of these things were in those immaculate drawers which professors assured me were Science.

To such irrelevant reflection I deviated more than once while reading Dr. Leah Feder's study of relief measures adopted in certain American cities from 1857 to 1922. Here was science in the field of sociology as I had first come to know that term in the field of bees.

Data, details, fill nearly four hundred pages. From it all, something of the relief world of the past, as seen by the administrator-mind of the present, emerges. For that same world as seen by the client-mind, Miss Feder has apparently felt less concern. The giving of relief and not the getting of it are the burden of her story, which has met the standard of technical excellence required of scholars at Bryn Mawr College and the Russell Sage Foundation.

I will not prowl among the foot-noted borders of Dr. Feder's crowded academic garden, looking for weeds to point to with the customary sadism of a fellow-scholar, although there are oversights, and not unimportant ones. These derive mainly from one source—uncritical acquiescence in ruling-class attitudes as being of the great body of accepted truth. One example: of the Tompkins Square "riot" in 1874, the author says: "The Department of Parks, fearing disturbance, had withdrawn permission for the meeting, but 10,000 to 15,000 people gathered and had to be dispersed." Why did they *have* to be dispersed, one is tempted to ask, recalling that the unemployed sought relief and the city officials opposed giving it? Furthermore, one is tempted to ask why the author did not consult the contemporary newspapers, capitalist as well as labor, before applying, in this instance, the routine administrative judgment on all unemployed gatherings. As a matter of fact, evidence about the Tompkins Square riot points fairly clearly toward police provocation arranged in advance.

Lacking the discipline of Marxist training, Dr. Feder has tended to ignore the causes of riots—and of the less dramatic phenomena which are the central material of her study. She persistently slights, for instance, the creative or perhaps magnetic function of the unemployed in drawing relief to themselves and in influencing its contours. Relief and the unemployed coëxist, but do not interact, if one is to judge from this work. Although the author cannot ignore demonstrations, demands, agitation, as having contemporaneous existence, the effect of mass pressure (whether real, threatened, or merely feared) does not receive much analysis. Nor, on the other hand, does Dr. Feder deal with charity either as a measure of self-defense taken by the controlling economic group or as a symbol of power displayed by it. Indeed, nowhere in this study, which touches capitalism at the series of points where its inadequacy has been most glaring, does the nature of relief appear illuminated against the economy which is its inseparable background.

The class attitudes and services, even of such arch-capitalists as Robert M. Hartley, creator of the Association for Improving the Condition of the Poor, remain uninvestigated by Dr. Feder, although she admits into her pages some of Hartley's bitter, inaccurate comments on the militant unemployed. At the same time, testimony of the unemployed, many of whom have been vocal in the past, does not receive its full day in this court. The organizations, movements, friends of the jobless are listed, to be sure, but not listened to.

The survey stops short of the complex present—an omission consistent with the habits of departmentalized non-Marxian thought, which keeps so many of its facts discrete—and discreet. Essential naïveté, in other words, marks the book. But in spite of all shortcomings, it has value as a repository of useful materials which might otherwise have long remained scattered in the archives of cities and social agencies.

It offers for inspection many rare bees, as it were, but the mere collection of bees, I now know, is not Science. Ability to comprehend bees—or relief data—in their living context, is not always paired with a talent for hoarding them, but is a *sine qua non*. Without it, no problem can be dealt with in its entirety—which is to say, no problem can be treated in the scientific manner.

C. ELWELL.

Soriano

America in Art

AMERICA TODAY, *a book of 100 prints chosen and exhibited by the American Artists' Congress. Equinox Coöperative Press.* $5.

A NOTABLE contribution toward a popular pictorial culture in the United States, this book reveals how the progressive front in American art has broadened and swung steadily closer to the main currents of American life.

Its pages record graphic interpretations of their environment by a hundred artists from all parts of the United States. Despite the wide range in content, technique, and æsthetic outlook, there is a broad homogeneity to this work. Its basis is the predominant orientation toward the working and exploited masses.

Studio nudes and still lifes have been abandoned for the harsh drama of the Pennsylvania coal fields by Harry Gottlieb, Margaret Lowengrund, Barbara Burrage, Harry Sternberg, and Elizabeth Olds. Desolation of agricultural America by the combination of drought and financial gouging reverberates through the prints of George Biddle, Lucienne Bloch, Arnold Blanch, Mervin Jules, Charles Pollock, and others. Many cover the waterfront, with Fletcher Martin's "Trouble in Frisco" epitomizing marine workers' militancy. Then there is a whole gallery of sharp character studies drawn from the country's undernourished millions. Even the touches of gaiety in Angelo Pinto's "Shooting Gallery," Paul Cadmus's "Shore Leave," and Fritz Eichenberg's "Glimpse of Broadway Revelry" center, significantly, on the amusements and pleasures of the masses.

Emergence of this work marks the upswing of a new period in American art. Critical realism becomes a major objective. And there is a corresponding decline in extreme forms of subjectivity, or "pure art."

"Pure art" had its heyday in the Coolidge-Hoover era of "perpetual prosperity," when most artists shared the illusions of unconditioned creative independence. These certitudes were shaken to their foundations by the depression. Endless heated debates over "art versus propaganda" (a very crude formulation of the issue) bore witness to the urgent need for a reorientation and hesitance and uncertainty over the steps leading to it.

Leadership of a revolutionary nucleus pointed the course ahead. And the advance of artists to a working-class form of organization, the union, for their economic protection, involving picketing and militant demonstrations for the right to work, powerfully furthered the projection of those artistic values expressing community of interest with the workers. Finally, the front was further broadened to include the older, established, more individualistic artists through the formation of the American Artists' Congress, which has carried out this splendid enterprise in popular graphic art called "America Today."

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The movement so impressively launched here toward a people's art will mature most rapidly through the general political-social advance to a people's front in America. On the one hand, it will open up wide channels of distribution to the masses. On the other, it will demand of the artists a more direct, a more readily intelligible imagery than many of them have yet achieved. It will mean the overcoming of such technical obscurantism as we find in Jolan Gross Bettelheim's "Civilization at the Crossroads," where the formalist-abstract devices have not been fully integrated with the artist's purpose, with the result that the important anti-fascist message must be deciphered rather than read straight off. It will mean also less preoccupation with the broken-down ragged "lumpen" elements, whose prominence in these prints is an unconscious reflection of uncertainty, of a sense of being on the fringe of life, that still lingers among artists. But as they gain in group strength and self-confidence through organizational activity, that feeling will naturally find expression in new and more positive conceptions. It is safe to predict that there will be more attention to the healthy core of the working class. Certainly there is plenty of inspiring material in America today. For example, the press reports how a Michigan sheriff, trying to persuade General Motors sit-down strikers to leave the plant, was laughed out of the place. We hope that laugh will reverberate through the coming American art.

O. FRANK.

Baedeker According to W.P.A.

IDAHO: A GUIDE IN WORD AND PICTURE, *prepared by the Federal Writers' Projects of the Works Progress Administration. Caldwell, Idaho: The Caxton Printers, Ltd. $3.*

THE Federal Writers' Projects have been perhaps the favorite target of those who believe, or profess to believe, that Roosevelt is in direct alliance with the Kremlin, and that the arts projects in general are nothing more than Trojan horses stuffed with Reds, who, safe within the government's paternalistic walls and sustained by the bounty of the taxpayers, will presently sally forth to establish a cultural dictatorship with Russian labels. The Idaho guidebook should serve to reassure these viewers with alarm, for the volume is on the whole a mild performance.

The spoor of Vardis Fisher, State Director of the Idaho project, is found on almost every page, and, as is usually the case with Mr. Fisher when he deals with the concrete and specific, he writes felicitously and on occasion brilliantly. The section entitled "An Essay in Idaho History" is especially well done—straight, honest stuff that pulls no punches—though it stops short with the passing of the frontier. Throughout the book, there is evidenced a singular reluctance toward—or at least a neglect of—controversial aspects of the modern scene. Too often the objects of criticism are almost as impersonal as Greed or Mammon in an allegorical drama. It is laudable, of course, to harpoon the early traders and to assert: "No one could ever be credulous enough to suppose that these barons of greed and sharp wits gave much attention to scrupulous methods." But it would be even more courageous to give at least a brief history of the bitter labor struggles that have darkened Idaho soil. What of the bloody Cœur d'Alene copper strike? What of the men who work in the mines and who sometimes, in hunger and desperation, strike and die for their rights? It is one thing to castigate the abstract and remote faults of the pioneers, another to discuss the past and present labor policies of the Anaconda Copper Company. It is not a question of partisanship, but of historical fact.

Vardis Fisher is an author of distinction, frankness, and integrity; the Caxton Printers is a house with a decidedly liberal policy. If the Idaho guidebook sums up to something less than it should be—something less than the original conception of the state guides—its timidity or compromise, in the opinion of this reviewer, cannot be laid at the door of either editor or publisher. The Federal Writers' Projects were postulated on a sound and admirable theory, and the national administrators are, in the main, men and women of literary achievement and artistic perception. Unfortunately, no provision has been made for publication of the guides after they have been made ready for the press, and too often the state directors will be forced to go, hat in hand, to reactionary bodies or officials for sponsorship or payment of the printing costs. Moreover, the national office has been shorn of a great deal of its power to interfere with the emasculating activities of local arbiters of the arts.

In more than one instance, plans to publish something resembling a well-rounded regional or city guidebook have been thwarted by the intervention of chambers of commerce or other reactionary bodies. Not every state has a Caxton Printers on tap, and it is extremely doubtful whether the Idaho guidebook could have run the gauntlet of literary critics set up by such organizations, almost invariably hard-headed business men and proud of it, proud, too, of their section or city, the best on God's green earth. These loyal sons will brook not the slightest criticism—and their interpretation of "criticism" is often a weird one—of their home region or home folks.

The Idaho guidebook, all in all, is something to be thankful for. It evades or neglects some topics—important topics—but it is miles ahead of platitudinous chamber of commerce booklets. There are "tall tales," descriptive tours, competent articles on fauna, flora, geology, etc., etc. In the "tall tales" section, this reviewer recognizes a story (the one having to do with the dog too speedy for an express train) as one current in many parts of the country, each locality imparting to its version its peculiar flavor. These folk tales are related with a fine and fitting gusto. The tours are written with awareness, feeling, and even passion at the beauty of the Idaho mountains and streams. Ghost towns of the old mining

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days are credibly recreated, and if the descriptive passages sometimes veer toward floridity, they are never dull. The maps are excellent, and so are a number of the photographs. Others are dark and foggy.

If the Federal Writers' Projects turn out nothing less creditable than *Idaho: A Guide in Word and Picture,* they will have amply justified their existence. JACK CONROY.

Brief Reviews

COLUMBIA POETRY—1936. *Columbia University Press.* $1.

Contemporary realities are not yet the concern of this year's official crop of Columbia poets. Though William Rose Benét expresses the hope in his introduction that the young poets will help stem the tide of fascism in America, there is nothing in this text to justify him. The beauties and oddities of Nature provide familiar inspiration for some; others describe rarified human types; all write in traditional sonnets and quatrains. Most of the verse is mediocre; a very little, good. Of the good, occasional felicitous phrases like "where vagrant cat's paws scratch the satin bosom of the bay" and "having no word to autograph my pain" are characteristic. Most excellent is a cleverly paced sonnet by Louise Hovde Mortenson. These young versifiers, however, still deal with life tangentially. L. G.

POVERTY AND POPULATION IN INDIA, *by D. G. Karve. Oxford University Press.* $1.50.

After a statistical survey of existing population trends and national production, the author, a teacher in the University of Bombay, comes to the conclusion that conditions in India are getting better principally because population is on the decrease. While it is generally agreed that a declining population is a sure sign of economic and social degeneration, it would appear that apologists for British imperialism are forced to reverse this opinion to make a case for the status quo. After recognizing the existence of "a vicious circle: the people are unhealthy and miserable because they are alleged to be too many, and they are too many because in their poverty of physique, mind, and resources, they know no better than to drift along the path of easy births and easier deaths," Professor Karve believes that the way to break the vicious circle is adoption of a "mental attitude of self-regulation and self-improvement." In short, a thoroughly idealist solution for the problems raised by imperialism superimposed on feudalism.

★

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Anti-Semitism, by Hugo Valentin. Viking. $2.
Fine Prints Old and New, by Carl Zigrosser. Covici, Friede. $1.
The Tenements of Chicago, 1908-1935, by Edith Abbott, assisted by Sophonisba P. Breckinridge and other associates. U. of Chicago Press. $5.
Tom Paine: Friend of Mankind, by Hesketh Pearson. Harper's. $3.
Almanac for New Yorkers: 1937, compiled by Workers of the Federal Writers Project of the Works Progress Administration in the City of New York. Simon & Schuster. 50c.
Change the World!, by Michael Gold. International Publishers. $1.39.
Behind the Spanish Barricades, by John Langdon-Davies. McBride. $2.75.
The Final Struggle, being Countess Tolstoy's Diary for 1910. Oxford. $2.50.
The New Soviet Constitution, by Joseph Stalin. International. 2c.

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SIGHTS AND SOUNDS

Wayward youth, Maxwell Anderson, and "Steel"—Modern British architecture—Music and Movies

IF you like the idea of hearing the names of the American League Against War and Fascism and the old *Masses* mentioned in cold blood on a Broadway stage without a trace of a sneer and at the same time without any partisan ballyhoo—just mentioned, that is, as institutions in American life that have as much right to be mentioned, and just as much reason to be reckoned with as, let us say, the American Legion or the Twentieth Century Limited, then you will get a special little thrill from Mark Reed's otherwise pleasing comedy *Yes, My Darling Daughter,* which Alfred de Liagre, Jr., has put on at the Playhouse. As you have guessed from the title, the story involves a mother's consent to—or at least acquiescence in—a daughter's venturing into the chill waters of the unconventional. As it works out (and here the tried Broadway and Hollywood formula sticks out like a sore thumb), it is just for a dip which invigorates swimmer and audience alike, after which the good red flannels of respectable marriage are hauled gratefully on over the tingling limbs. There is nothing really outstanding about this play, which has its share of lameness in the first and third acts, except the genuineness of the characters' behavior (chiefly in the second act) in the problem situation involved: the position of the mother, a liberal novelist, now married to a banker, who in her day did her share of pioneering for free love on a high philosophical as well as on a practical plane, and who is confronted by her daughter's insistence on following in her footsteps. Faced with her past (her daughter has dug it up in the course of research for a thesis on the effects of Greenwich Village on moral and political freedom), she is forced to yield, with consequences apparently satisfactory all around, although there were some uncertain moments. Lucile Watson does an exceptional job as the mother, and the supporting company contributes power to her elbow.

On a similar theme, but, alas, helpless in swaddling clothes of heavy sentimentality, is *Fulton of Oak Falls,* "being George M. Cohan's way of telling Parker Fenelly's story." Here it is the father, played by Mr. Cohan with his full repertoire of nudges, giggles, sly looks, and heart-to-heart talks, who is the main character. If you've never seen Mr. Cohan, you'd better have a look at this play, not because the play is anything to look at, but because Mr. Cohan's technique definitely is. He is one handy man around a stage. But we must report that the rest of the cast looks as if it were chosen and directed to make Mr. Cohan's performance stand out by contrast.

Maxwell Anderson's third play this season, *The Masque of Kings,* which the Theatre Guild sponsors, lacks the pretentiousness of *The Wingless Victory* and the phony ideology of *High Tor,* and, as a consequence, seems more palatable than either, although it lacks also the dramatic imaginativeness of *High Tor* and any real distinction. Coming close on the heels of *Richard II,* Shakespeare's current masque of kings, this dramatization of a tale which culminates in the mysterious hunting-lodge death of Austrian Crown Prince Rudolph and his *Spuse* offers an interesting contrast in its way of looking at royalty. By implication, Anderson's analysis is more revolutionary than Shakespeare's, since he shows how a liberal monarch is frustrated in his attempted coup d'état against a reactionary one by the realization that to consolidate the coup, the same reactionary methods of rule are necessary. And it is, of course, not unnatural that Rudolph should give up his campaign against Franz Joseph when this realization dawns, and bump himself off. At the same time, there is no suggestion by Mr. Anderson (we are not saying he should suggest it; we are merely saying he doesn't) that the reason for this frustration is the fact that property relations have not changed. The revolutionary content is, as we have said, by implication only, and the play uses Rudolph's frustration only as the dramatic causation of his own psychological tailspin. In spite of this, however, insight into statecraft gives the play its vitality—which is enhanced by the performances of Dudley Digges as the emperor, Pauline Frederick as the empress, and Henry Hull as the crown prince. Margo, as the *Spuse,* does a fairly appealing job with a vague role.

Editor Joseph Freeman's description in this issue, of the way artists and writers function in Mexico to teach the social lessons of our day to the workers and peasants throughout the country, has an interesting parallel in the plans of the International Ladies' Garment Workers' Union Labor Stage for road-showing John Wexley's *Steel* through the steel towns. *Steel* has been brought up to date to dovetail in with the current C.I.O. unionization drive, and if the production it has received in New York from the I.L.G.W.U. Players is any index, it is such stuff as to set steel workers howling with glee, at the same time that it teaches the lessons an organizing drive must teach. We hope the itinerary will be settled and the road-showing started before the month is out.

ALEXANDER TAYLOR.

Woodcut by Keil

INDUSTRIAL ARTS

ON VIEW at the Museum of Modern Art in New York through March 7 (after which it will tour the country) is the Exhibition of Modern English Architecture of the past five years.

The socio-economic development of housing and town planning is displayed in striking montages of photographs, charts, and graphs that were assembled by the Housing Centre of London and arranged for exhibit by Bruno Funaro of Columbia University. Despite the fact that through reform measures there are now nearly a million modern dwelling units in England owned and managed by municipalities within the reach of *employed* working-class families; and notwithstanding all the plans projected for housing on a national scale, this exhibit is a graphic indictment of the present National government's failure to provide needed working-class housing.

The photographs and plans exhibited are of middle-class and "luxury" apartment developments, private schools and hospitals, seaside casinos, expensive stores and restaurants, and subway-station entrances. The only buildings shown (and among the most outstanding) for lower-class patronage are those of the immensely popular London Zoo.

You are in for a treat when you see the motion picture which is an integral part of the exhibit, *New Architecture for the London Zoo.* The film was made by the Hungarian, Moholy-Nagy, for years a teacher at the now extinct Bauhaus. Of all techniques, the movie is best suited to present that fourth-dimensional aspect of architecture: the time element involved in viewing it. Utilizing the animated technique in his titles, and cleverly avoiding the use of trick artificial lighting, Moholy-Nagy gives you the experience that you usually get in actually viewing a building inside and out. Of particular note both in the movie and in plans and photos, is the penguin pond described by Berthold Lubetkin in collaboration with the architectural firm known as

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F. 23

Tecton. The designers have done an elliptically-shaped piece of abstract sculpture in concrete which provides a perfect setting for these incredible performing penguins. It is hygienically and organically suited for them to display their natural characteristics, shape, color, and movement to the public.

An evaluation of each project in the exhibit from the point of view of fulfillment of function, materials, and methods of construction, form, and style is not possible in this space. However, for building whose emphasis is rather on sound planning, look at: House in Bromley, Kent, by Godfrey Samuel; Sunspan Bungalow at Welwyn, by Wells Coates (although arbitrary in its symmetry); house for Benn Levy, London, by Walter Gropius and Maxwell Fry. The latter is unfortunate in its form relationships, due in part to the "tying-in" element at the roof level—a device also used by F. R. S. Yorke in the house at Iver. Gropius seems more in his element when he designs other than small houses, for this pioneer's huge working-class housing developments and the Bauhaus buildings at Dessau, Germany, done in the pre-Hitler days, are among the best examples of functional designing in the world.

As noteworthy examples of the integration of good planning with a pleasing, abstract relationship of design elements and a fine articulation of detail: house constructed of wood on Lloyd George's estate, Churt, Surrey, by Anthony Chitty; Lawn Road flats, Hempstead, London, by Wells Coates; Pullman Court, Streatham, London, by Frederick Gibberd; house at Farnham Common by Valentine Harding; estate offices, Dartington Hall, Totnes, South Devon, by William Lescaze; Whittinghame College, Brighton, by A. V. Pilichowski; elephant house, Zoo at Whipsnade, by Tecton.

Tecton is also responsible for some designs that would be difficult for them to justify, such as the North Gate of the London Zoo, with its ripply-curved roof that seems to be in motion, and the house for B. Lubetkin at Whipsnade, with its arbitrary use of oblique and circular forms that make a pleasing pattern on paper, but no sense as house planning. Also the factory at Beeston, by Sir E. Owen Williams, by its use of tricky detail, loses much of the directness and simplicity that should be characteristic of such buildings. In contrast with all these is Marcel Breuer's pavilion at the Royal Show, Bristol, done in collaboration with F. R. S. Yorke, which offers an exciting setting, in traditionally laid walls of heavy fieldstone, for the display of commercial furniture of Breuer's own design.

Because of the basic similarity of England and the United States economically and culturally, one is struck by the relatively greater acceptance of modern architecture by the conservative middle class of England as compared with our country. Although quantitatively and perhaps qualitatively there has been just as much work done here as there, it is pertinent that this exhibit represents the work of about forty different architects, whereas the

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modern work of this caliber executed in America is confined to the practice of no more than ten men.

If you should experience difficulty in understanding the relationship between plans and photographs, it won't be your fault. Although the exhibit is commendable on the whole, certain aspects of good exhibition technique for architectural subjects have been neglected: plans should be marked with arrows indicating the point from which corresponding photographs were taken; arrows showing the direction of north on the plans would help to explain the orientation of particular rooms in the various projects; many photos are without accompanying plans, making the photos worthless for serious consideration.

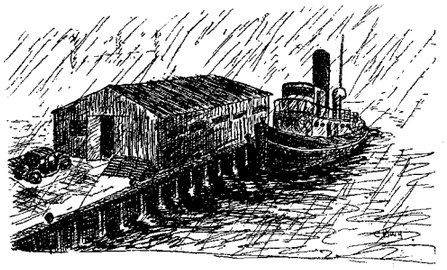
Technical note for those who see the exhibit, *re* Distemper on Celotex: Celotex is pressed wood-fiber board about one-half-inch thick, used for wall and ceiling surfaces; Distemper is a paint composed of pigment plus glue binder soluble in cold water.

WILLIAM FRIEDMAN.

CONCERT MUSIC

PERHAPS my trouble is that of the grouchy double bass player: the job is all right, but I just don't like music. It was bad enough to look forward to writing these notes when I believed that nine out of ten concerts weren't worth going to. Now I'm beginning to get bored at some of the hand-picked tenth concerts. Every so often a week comes along with as many as three or four programs that seem interesting and attracting, but no matter how courageously I start out, I'm beginning to look for excuses around the third evening, and I never yet have made the fourth. Even appetizing works seem to lose their savor when they follow a few sour or overcooked dishes; the æsthetic juices refuse to flow, and there's at least one vacant chair at the next tonal banquet.

My stock snarl that program-makers are giving stones for bread hardly applies here, for the only concerts I've heard recently (or seriously considered hearing, or—like that of the Dessoff Choirs on February 2—regretted having missed) have boasted decided distinction either in part or in whole in that respect. The finest was the first of the Federal Music Project Madrigal Singers' new series that I have been plugging so enthusiastically. But if anyone stung by my little sermon to take in the January 31 concert makes a disappointed accusation that, after all the fine words, it was frankly dull, I can't deny it. I can only say that it wasn't the fault of my highly touted



Malcolm Chisholm

composers, for there was great music in the W.P.A. Theater that afternoon. It narrows down to a question of flaws in the performances or chronic tonal dyspepsia in myself, and I've got the chance to take the stand first.

The elementary tests of a conductor are mechanical and selective, the ability to pick and organize his ensemble, drill it to keep together and on pitch, choose worthwhile material for it to play or sing. Most of the conductors I've heard lately haven't progressed beyond these elements to a mastery of the art that distinguishes truly adequate performances from routine note reading, the art of making music flow and, even more, the art of making music soar. The very media in which music exists are time and air. Obviously, the prime considerations of the director must be the existence and control of motion and buoyancy. Motion we get, often in super-abundance, but how often is it perfectly controlled, as delicately nuanced as volume intensities, or technically and psychologically correct in its continuity and space punctuation? Levitation is still rarer. As clumsy as a taxiing aeroplane, a musical work in too many performances lurches and strains violently for a flight that never begins.

With an orchestra, perhaps, sheer speed, dynamic impact, and terrific engine roar can dupe us into thinking we are getting someplace, but in choral singing, no such illusion is possible; either the music has the effortless, serene lift and dip of a glider, or it has nothing. The harder a conductor works on the stand (the real work is done in rehearsal; what we see in concert is largely shadow boxing at best), the more likely he is to flail the music to earth, if not to tatters. Without hearing a note, it would still be possible to determine from a conductor's physical action whether he is beating all life and buoyancy out of the work or successfully fighting dead weight and gravitation. Show me a conductor whose most frequent gesture is not a powerful down beat, but a lifting motion, whose hands are turned up more often than they are clenched into fists, and I'll show you a chorus or orchestra that can get its music soaring.

Beating time, pantomiming crescendos, dramatic shush-shushing, and singling out choirs or soloists is nine-tenths waste or theatrical effort, leading eventually to a Stokowskian spotlight and the malicious *reductio ad absurdum* of a Reginald Gardiner. With proper rehearsal and an occasional attack or change of tempo indication, any half-way competent ensemble can keep together without difficulty. Dr. Muck, and more recently Koussevitzky, have often demonstrated that, by remaining motionless for several minutes once a performance was under way. In old polyphonic works in particular, where bar lines are a convenience (albeit a dangerous one) for the eye only, and quite meaningless to the music, where each part has a rhythmic flow and period of its own, the more vehement a conductor is, the surer he is to ruin the flexibility and airy weave so essential to a proper performance. (Naturally, I am not arguing for conductorless ensembles, but for less conduct-

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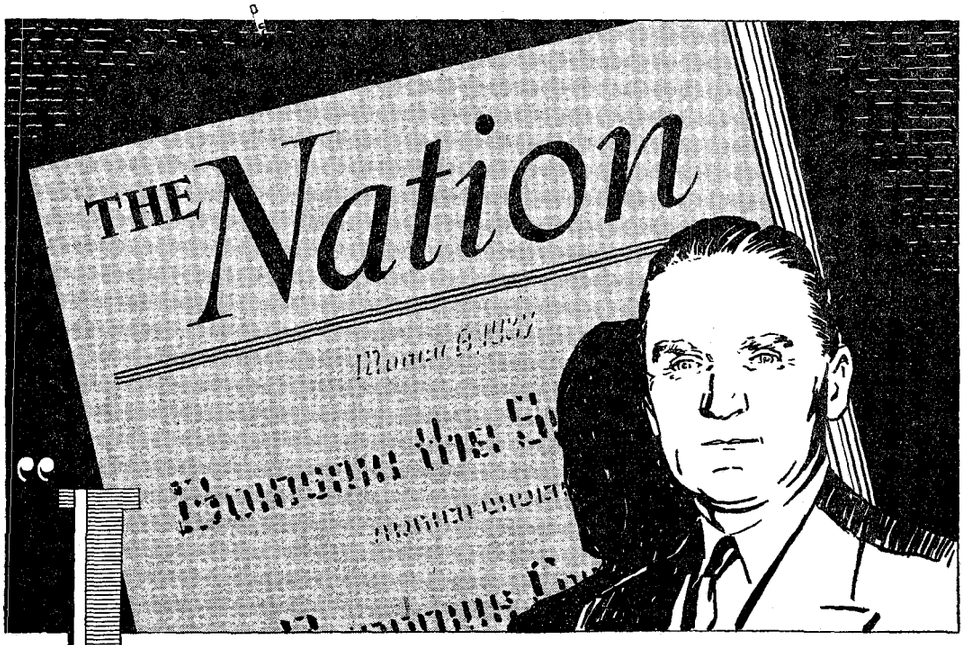

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ing and more direction of the performers.)

There is where good musicians like Lehman Engel of the Madrigal Group and Otto Luening, guest with the Philharmonic-Symphony Chamber Orchestra, fall down. The latter with his penchant for gesticulatory pile-driving is far worse, yet having a more experienced and talented ensemble (at the February 1 concert in the Bennington College series), his performances were less thoroughly plowed under. Incidentally, while his program didn't approach the lofty stature of Engel's, it revealed some admirable works. Well off the beaten track with its Pergolesi Sonata, Gabrieli canzona, and Busoni clarinet concertino, it added a rare touch of humor with the bluff homespun dances of Stephen Foster's *Village Festival.* Luening's *Prelude to a Hymn Tune* by William Billings was notable for an excellent setting of the staunch old air and utterly incongruous meanderings of his own. But Paul Nordoff's prelude and so-called fugues, while betraying more than a touch of Hollywood obviousness, had a continuity and gusto that were decidedly refreshing and which, with a little discipline and originality, are likely to give rise to far more important works.

I hoped to get away from conductors, at least visually, when I turned to disks, radio, and the films, but I was cruelly bilked at the pretentious première of *The Robber Symphony,* one Friedrich Feher's brain-child, substituting "music" (read "jejune tonal reminiscences") for dialogue, and enlisting the services of his wife and child in the cast of a tasteless, floundering attempt at film fantasy. I wouldn't bring this up if the family Feher hadn't actually got some serious attention and failed to make its proper flop after one showing. Luckily, I was able to get the bad taste out of my mouth with *The Eternal Mask* at the Filmarte. Anton Profes's score amounted to little as music, *per se,* but it was used with admirable economy, and skillfully heightened the effectiveness of the film. Add the diverting and catholic "Symphonic Strings" programs of WOR, the more conventional but superbly reproduced recorded broadcasts of WQXR, the new albums of *L'Anthologie Sonore* disks, and I no longer worry about my musical dyspepsia, but I entertain even graver doubts of the rewards of concert-going.

R. D. DARRELL.

THE SCREEN

A VERY lean week, indeed. Take *Green Light* (Warner Bros.), for instance. It is a very profound film about Faith, produced under the righteous banner of the Hearst Cosmopolitan Productions. Try to imagine, if you can, a motion picture composed of the elements of *Arrowsmith, The Magnificent Obsession, The Story of Louis Pasteur,* and *The Miracle Man,* based on a novel that was written by Lloyd C. Douglas in the composite manner of Arthur Brisbane and Bruce Barton. Only then will you get a slight inkling of what *Green Light* is like. That eloquent sentimen-

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talist, Director Frank Borzage, completes the perfect Hearst setting. It is regrettable that such excellent actors as Cedric Hardwicke and Walter Abel are compelled to waste their time and reputation on such junk.

Head Over Heels in Love (Gaumont British) brings us once more that well-known English dancer-singer-comedian in another musical film directed by her husband Sonnie Hale. It is a dull affair based on a conventional French triangle tale and boasting of some unusually uninspired music by Gordon and Revell.

The only note of cheer is in the inconspicuous and unpretentious *We're on the Jury* (R.K.O.). Whatever satire there was in the original play, *Ladies of the Jury* has been diluted, but Helen Broderick and Victor Moore have an opportunity to show us again what good comedians they are. Especially Mr. Moore.

PETER ELLIS.

★

Forthcoming Broadcasts

(Times given are Eastern Standard, but all programs listed are on coast-to-coast hookups)

Housing. "Your Home and Mine," first of a series of broadcasts sponsored by Federal Housing Authority, discussing financing and building. Sat., Feb. 20, 10 a.m., Coulmbia.

Astronomy. Exploding stars will be discussed by Dr. Clyde Fisher and Hans Christian Adamson. Sat., Feb 20, 5:30 p.m., Columbia.

Labor History. Bob Trout, commentator, in collaboration with American Historical Assn., Sun., Feb. 21, 1:45 p.m.. Columbia.

Civil Liberties. First of a new series of broadcasts sponsored by the Office of Education of the U. S. Department of the Interior, "dramatizing the struggle of the human race in general and citizens of the U. S. in particular to win the civil liberties embodied in the bill of rights. The first deals with the story of how the bill of rights was put into the constitution." Mon., Feb. 22, 10:30 p.m., Columbia.

National Education Association Convention. Both the Columbia and the National broadcasting systems announce several programs at follows: Mon., Feb. 22, 2 and 6 p.m., N.B.C. red; Tues., Feb. 23, 3:30 and 4:30 p.m., Columbia; Wed., Feb. 24, 10:30 p.m., Columbia; Thurs., Feb. 25, 3:30 pm., Columbia; 7:45 p.m., N.B.C. red.

Recent Recommendations

MOVIES

You Only Live Once. Sylvia Sidney and Henry Fonda doing a good job under the direction of Fritz Lang, who saves a sour scenario.

The Good Earth. Hollywood's first honest approach to the Chinese people, through a screening of Pearl Buck's novel, with Paul Muni and Luise Rainer in the leading roles.

Spain in Flames. Raw documentation of the war.

The Plough and the Stars. Pretty satisfactory cinematizing of Sean O'Casey's play.

Black Legion. Warner Brothers' somewhat superficial document.

Camille. The old yarn, worth seeing only because has Garbo.

PLAYS

Richard II. (St. James, N. Y.). Superlative production of a good but seldom-produced Shakespeare item, with exceptional performances by Maurice Evans and Augustin Duncan.

Naughty Naughty ('00) (American Music Hall, N. Y.). Amiable, simple-minded spoofing.

Dr. Faustus (Elliott, N. Y.). The W.P.A. theater's lively revival of Christopher Marlowe's classic.

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